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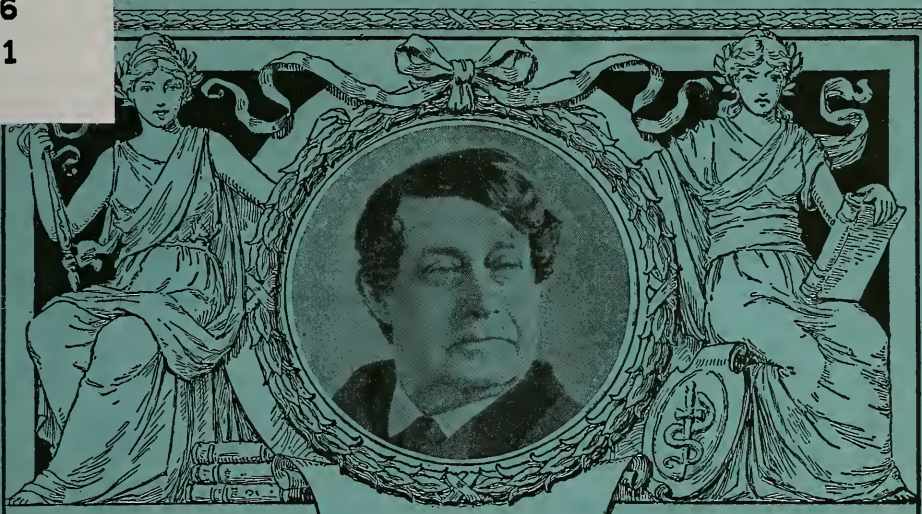

THE WILLIAM WARREN EDITION OF STANDARD PLAYS

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

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No. 5 Hamilton Place, Boston, Massachusetts

Much Ado About Nothing

A Comedy in Five Acts

By

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

This acting version is based on the Prompt-Book prepared by Winthrop Ames, director of "The Little Theatre," New York: former director "The New Theatre," New York.

BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.
1916

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Much Ado About Nothing

CHARACTERS

	Lyceum Theatre, London, Oct. 11, 1882.	*Hollis St. Theatre, Boston, Feb. 1, 1892.*
BENEDICK, *a young Lord of Padua.*	Henry Irving.	Robert Taber.
DON PEDRO, *Prince of Arragon.*	W. Terriss.	Chas. B. Hanford.
DON JOHN, *his bastard brother.*	C. Glenny.	Thos. L. Coleman.
CLAUDIO, *a young Lord of Florence.*	Forbes Robertson.	Wm. Stuart.
LEONATO, *Governor of Messina.*	Mr. Fernandez.	J. M. Francoeur.
ANTONIO, *his brother.*	H. Howe.	
BALTHASAR, *attendant on Don Pedro.*	J. Robertson.	Edm. Lawrence.
BORACHIO } *followers of*	F. Tyars.	Dodson Mitchell.
CONRADE } *Don John.*	Mr. Hudson.	Walter Thomas.
FRIAR FRANCIS.	Mr. Mead.	Giles Shine.
DOGBERRY, *a constable.*	S. Johnson.	H. A. Weaver.
VERGES, *a headborough.*	S. Calhaem.	Edm. Lawrence.
SEACOLE } *watchmen.*	Mr. Archer.	Edwin Howard.
OATCAKE } *watchmen.*	Mr. Harbury.	
A SEXTON.	Mr. Carter.	
A MESSENGER.	Mr. Haviland.	
A BOY.	Miss K. Brown.	
HERO, *a daughter to Leonato.*	Miss Millward.	Eugenia Liudemann.
MARGARET } *gentlewomen attending*	Miss Harwood.	Marie Knowles.
URSULA } *on Hero.*	Miss L. Payne.	Kitty Wilson.
BEATRICE, *niece to Leonato.*	Ellen Terry.	Julia Marlowe.

Gentlemen, Dancers, Watch, Attendants on Pedro, Choristers, etc.

SCENE.—Messina.

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Introduction

"Much Ado About Nothing" is supposed to have been written in 1597–98 and was first published in quarto by Valentine Simmes on August 23, 1600. The text that appears in the first folio is supposed to have been printed from an altered and corrected copy of this quarto that had been actually used in the theatre in connection with performances of this play—prepared possibly by the author himself for that purpose. The basis of this theory is the fact that the name of an actor, Jack Wilson, is here and there substituted by inadvertence for that of the character that he assumed —Balthasar.

The remote source of its plot is supposed to be a novel by Bandello ; its immediate source an antecedent play upon the same subject entitled "Benedicte and Betteris." A character, Innogen, the wife of Leonato, appears in the cast of characters and is mentioned in the stage directions of the play as it comes down to us, who neither speaks nor is spoken to in the text, and who is assumed to be a survival from the earlier piece in which she may have been actively concerned. The play as we have it was, however, also acted under the title of "Benedict and Beatrice," Charles I's copy of the second folio, preserved at Windsor Castle, bearing upon its title page the manuscript addition of this phrase as a second title, as if it were the more familiar one. We learn from Leonard Digges that these two characters were prime favorites with its first public.

"Much Ado About Nothing" is believed to have been first acted by The Lord Chamberlain's Company in or before 1600, but no definite notice of its performance has been discovered and no knowledge of its original performers has come down to us save the hint regarding Jack Wilson's participation, mentioned above, and the tradition that Will Kempe enacted the part of Dogberry and an actor named Cowley that of Verges. The single early mention of it as an acted play occurs in the manuscript accounts of Lord

Harrington, Treasurer of the Chambers to James I, in which it is stated to have been one of the plays performed by John Heminge and the rest of the King's Company before Prince Charles, the Lady Elizabeth and the Prince Palatine Elector in the beginning of the year 1613. From a subsequent entry dated May 22d, of the same year, the comedy appears to have been then acted under the title of "Benedick and Beatrice."

It received the usual "improvements" to suit the tastes of a later age: with this more or less laudable purpose Sir William Davenant in his time mingled together with somewhat unfortunate results the texts of this comedy and of "Measure for Measure"; while many years later, James Miller, a lecturing divine of Oxford, took equal parts of "Much Ado About Nothing" and "La Princesse d' Elide," by Moliere, altering the names of all the characters, and produced a play which he called "The Universal Passion," which was produced February 28, 1737. This hybrid was chiefly wonderful in the circumstance that it ran the proverbial period of nine days and then died.

The first performance recorded by the sedulous Genest was given February 9, 1721, at Lincoln's Inn Fields playhouse, Ryan being the Benedick of the occasion and Mrs. Cross the Beatrice. Genest adds: "not acted 30 years," from which it appears that its first popularity had deserted it. The great Garrick made his first appearance in the part of Benedick on November 14, 1748, supported by Mrs. Pritchard as Beatrice, and twenty-seven years later, on November 6, 1775, he again played the part at Covent Garden Theatre with the sparkling Mrs. Abington, who on that occasion played Beatrice for the first time at the age of thirty-eight. Twenty-two years after this, at the age of sixty, she acted Beatrice with almost unabated charm and capacity to the Benedick of Lewis. Mrs. Abington had only two really famous predecessors in this part—Mrs. Pritchard, David Garrick's first Beatrice, who made her first appearance in the character to the Benedick of Ryan, March 13, 1746, and Mrs. Barry, who adventured the part in support of Lee, at Covent Garden, November 8, 1774, the performance being announced as "for the first time in twenty years." Garrick's acting in the rôle seems to have been approved from the fact that eight performances of the play were given at the time of his first appearance, but his failure to revive the piece for so long an interval may be regarded as evidence that the part was not a favorite with him.

On February 10, 1778, Henderson appeared for the first time as Benedick at Drury Lane Theatre, supported by Miss Pope, and on April 30, 1788, John Philip Kemble and Miss Farren were seen for the first time in this play. In 1831 Fanny Kemble appeared as Beatrice, supported by her handsome father, Charles Kemble. On February 24, 1843, at Drury Lane Theatre, Macready produced this comedy in sumptuous style, making the first attempt to costume it with absolute propriety. His Benedick was supported by the handsome Mrs. Nisbett as Beatrice. The inevitable "freak" performance has not been lacking, Creswick having doubled the two parts of Benedick and Dogberry at the Holborn Theatre, London, in 1872. The really notable Beatrice of recent times is that of Ellen Terry, first seen in support of Henry Irving on the evening of October 11, 1882, at the Lyceum Theatre, London, where the play ran for two hundred and twelve consecutive nights. This admirable performance is well remembered in the United States, where it began a successful season at Haverley's Theatre, Chicago, on February 15, 1884.

The first American performance of "Much Ado About Nothing" may have been given on the Island of Jamaica, where the comedy was announced for the benefit of Mrs. Hughes to be given on October 20, 1781, by the American Company then visiting the island. Mrs. Hughes died suddenly on the 16th, so that the play, if then given, was deprived of her services.

On March 18, 1789, this comedy was presented in Philadelphia, at the Southwark Theatre, which, with a managerial enterprise that compares very favorably with current manifestations of this quality, had been opened in this same month within a week of the repeal of the Act of Prohibition against the theatres after a ten years' battle. Hallam was the Benedick and Mrs. Morris the Beatrice. The first recorded performance of this play in New York was given May 30, 1796, with Mr. Hodgkinson and Mrs. Johnson in the leading rôles. Boston first saw "Much Ado About Nothing" on September 26, 1796, with Mr. Chalmers as Benedick and Mrs. Williamson as Beatrice. In 1828 Clara Fisher appeared in this play at the Tremont Theatre, in this city, to the Benedick of the elder Wallack who, twenty-four years later, supported the Beatrice of Laura Keene. On May 14, 1859, this veteran bade his farewell to the stage in the part of Benedick, at the age of sixty-four, to the Beatrice of Mrs. John Hoey.

On October 25, 1844, the celebrated Charlotte Cushman essayed

the part to the Benedick of Vandenhoff, and on October 18, 1852, Julia Bennett Barrow and Mr. Conway appeared in this play. The performances of Adelaide Neilson, Ada Cavendish, Mrs. Mowatt (to the Benedick of E. L. Davenport), Modjeska, Fanny Davenport and Julia Marlowe were notable among others, and are admiringly remembered.

F. E. CHASE.

June 16, 1916.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

			Average Playing Time
ACT I.		Courtyard before Leonato's House.—Afternoon.	13 min.
ACT II.		Leonato's Garden.—Evening.	
		(*N. B. The curtain will not be lowered between Acts II and III.*) - -	47 min.
ACT III.	*Scene 1.*	Leonato's garden.—Morning.	
	Scene 2.	Leonato's garden.—Afternoon. -	10 min.
	Scene 3.	A street.—Night. - - -	10 min.
ACT IV.	*Scene 1.*	A church.—Morning. - - -	18 min.
	Scene 2.	A prison.—Afternoon. - - -	7 min.
ACT V.	*Scene 1.*	Courtyard before Leonato's House.—Evening. - - - -	17 min.
	Scene 2.	Before Leonato's Monument.—Night, just before daybreak. - -	2 min.
	Scene 3.	Leonato's house, the Terrace.—Morning. - - - - - -	6 min.

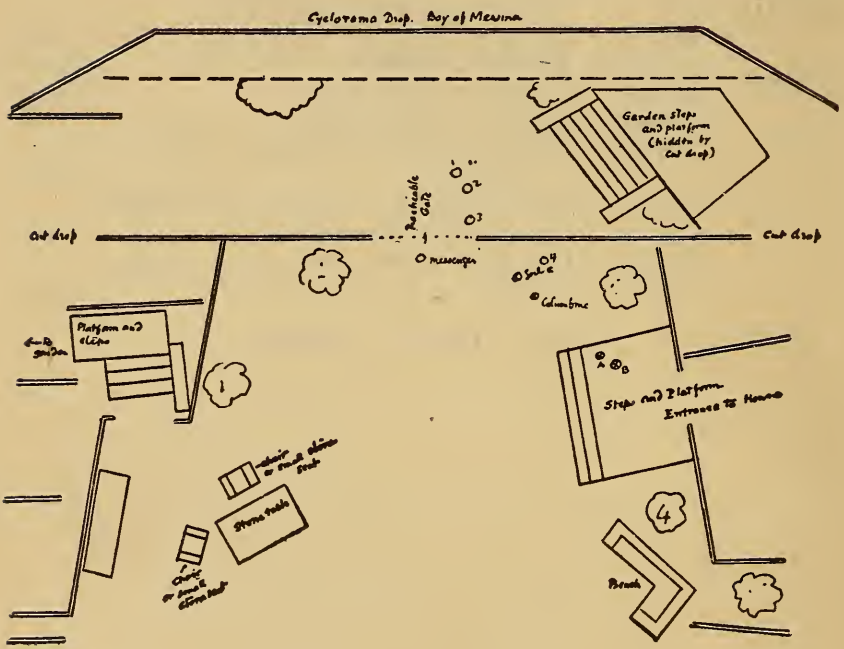
PLACE.—The City of Messina.

Much Ado About Nothing

SCENE PLOTS

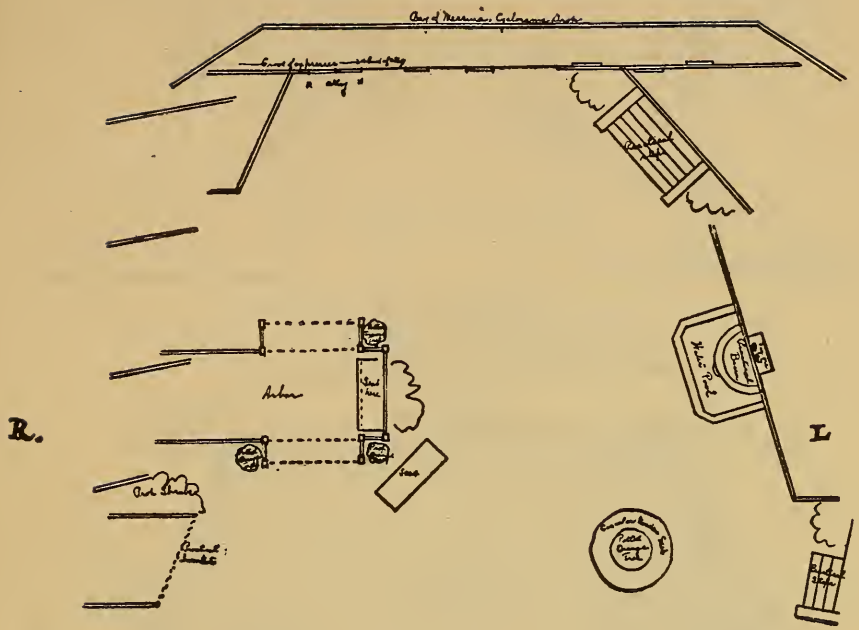
ACT I.

COURTYARD BEFORE LEONATO'S HOUSE



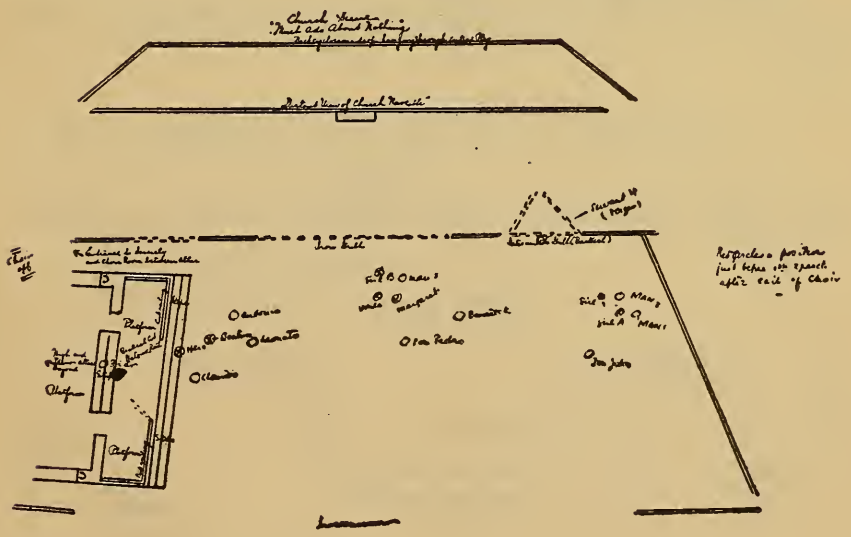
ACT II.

LEONATO'S GARDEN.

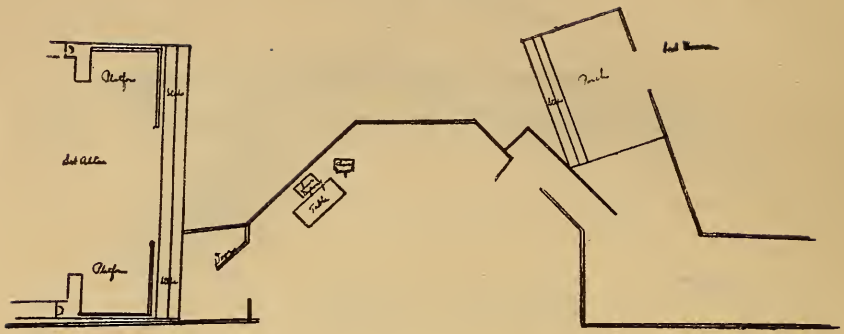


ACT IV.—*Scene 1.*

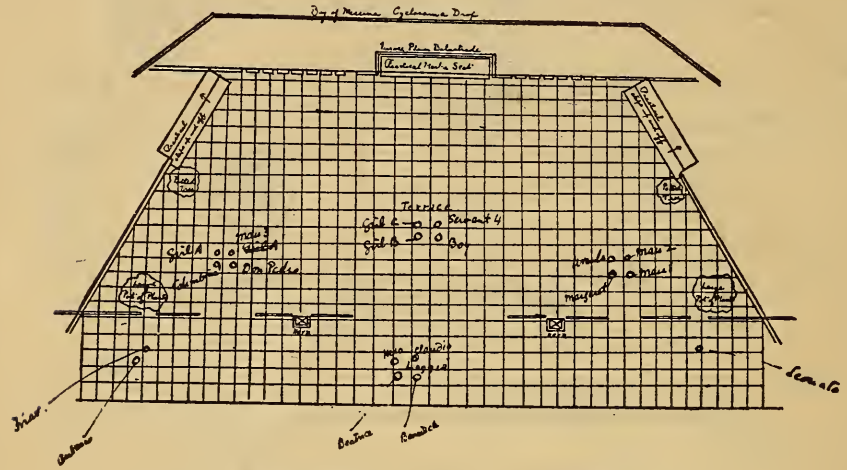
A CHURCH.



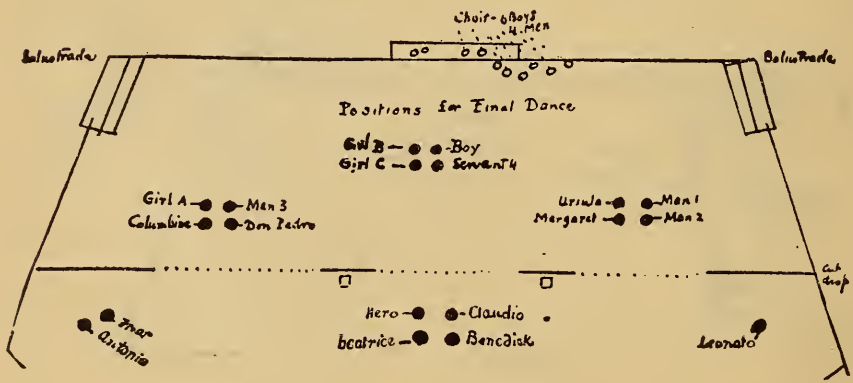
ACT IV.—*Scene 2.*



ACT V.—*Scene 3.*



POSITIONS FOR THE FINAL DANCE

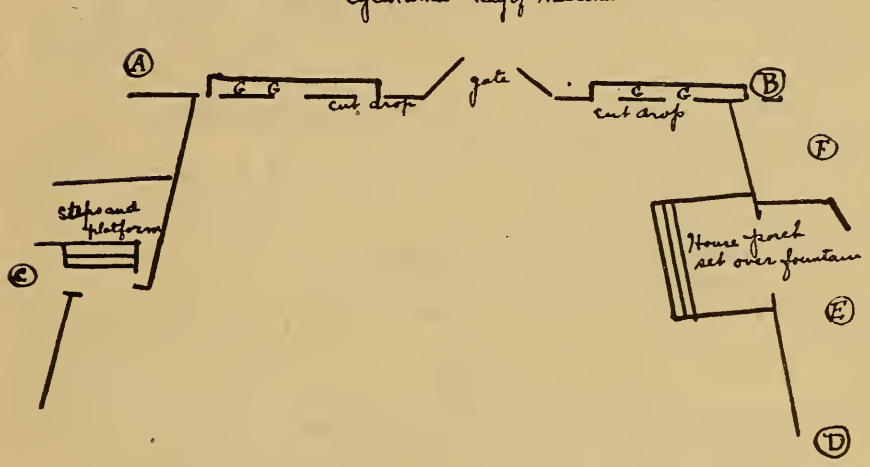


Much Ado About Nothing

LIGHT PLOTS

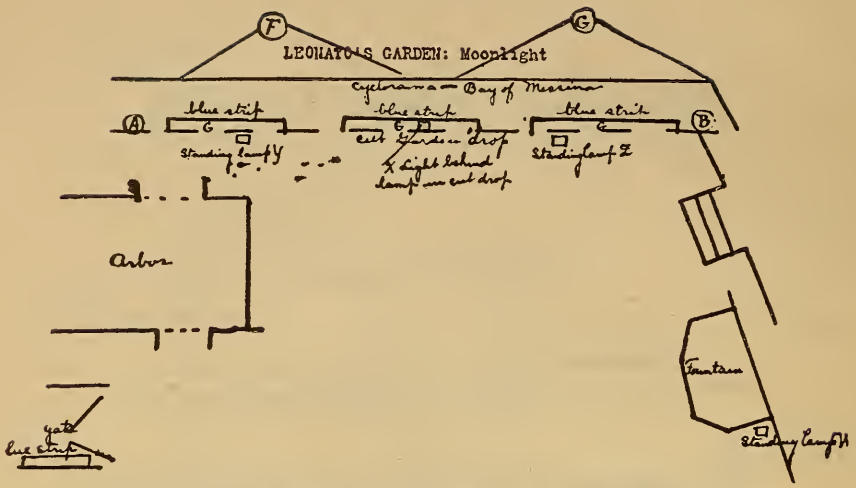
ACT I.—*Scene 1.*

COURTYARD BEFORE LEONARTO'S HOUSE: Afternoon



Amber and white foots and borders.
A B Amber arcs behind cut drop on cyclorama back drop.
C Amber arc behind R. 2 E.
D E F Amber arcs from fly gallery and electric bridge trained across stage.
G G Strips behind cut drop.
No change during scene.

ACT II.



At opening A B blue arcs on cyclorama behind cut drop.
G G G Blue strips behind cut drop.
D E Steel blue arcs from electric bridge and fly gallery trained across stage.
H Blue strip behind gate.
Lights in fountain connected with borders—or arranged to work in same colors—blue, red and amber.
V Hanging lamp from roof of arbor.
W, Y, Z } Standing lamps on standards
X Light to illuminate painted lantern in cut drop.
F, G } Arcs behind transparent cyclorama not lighted at rise.

All these lighted at rise and arranged to go out, or be carried off on cues.

Full blue foots and borders, with a little white except back border which is entirely blue.

CHANGE of LIGHTS at last part of ACT I.

After exit of Beatrice on cue, "Cousins, God give you joy" begin to *gradually* take off arcs from fly gallery and bridge D and E, and A and B on back drop, and strips G G G and strip H. They should be taken off so as not to be noticed, and should be all off when Don Pedro, Hero and Claudio exit on cue, "Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift."

As guests carrying lanterns exit, check foots and border as each lantern goes off stage.

As servant puts out hanging lamp V in arbor, put out that light and check foots and borders. Ditto light X behind cut drop.

As each standing lamp is carried out put out W Y Z ditto.

As last lamp goes out stage should be *almost* black with only *faint* glimmer in foots and borders.

As Borachio enters with trick lantern and holds it up, check foots and borders as low as possible, so that they can go *black* out when he blows out trick lantern.

As Borachio blows out trick lantern, borders and foots go black out, and stage is completely dark.

CHANGE of LIGHTS between ACT II and ACT III, Midnight to Dawn.

N. B. The curtain is not lowered between Acts II and III but there is a musical intermezzo from two to three minutes or longer, and during this lights change. The music is descriptive of (1) midnight, (2) the coming of dawn, (3) daybreak, and (4) full day, and lights should change somewhat to follow character of music.

After 45–60 seconds of black darkness (timed from the blowing out of trick lantern) a pale rose dawn light begins to show in the sky of transparent cyclorama (lights F G); from the sky it creeps down over the sea. Light behind drop brightens to red then orange. Then work up back border (ambers, not red) very gradually till back drop is fairly lighted before putting on other borders or foots. Then gradually work up reds and ambers in foots and borders together until stage is *half lit*, then gradually work on arcs D and E with rose pink mediums—gradually change these to ambers. Take off lights F and G behind drop and bring up lights A and B on back drop with amber mediums. Finally bring up all foots and borders to full amber and white and replace blue strips G G G and H with amber.

All this very gradually and timed to end with music.

Hand lamps and standard lamps for Act II. Three antique hand lanterns with candles—different patterns, to be carried by guests. Four lamps with standards, garden lamps. One trick storage battery lamp for Borachio. Lamps for dancers.

ACT III.—*Scene 1.*

Same as Act II.—Morning.

Lights as left after change.

No change of lights during act.

ACT III.—*Scene 2.*

Same as Act II.—Late afternoon.

Lights as in Act III, Scene 1, but with rose pink mediums on arcs, and a little red in foots and borders.

CHANGE:

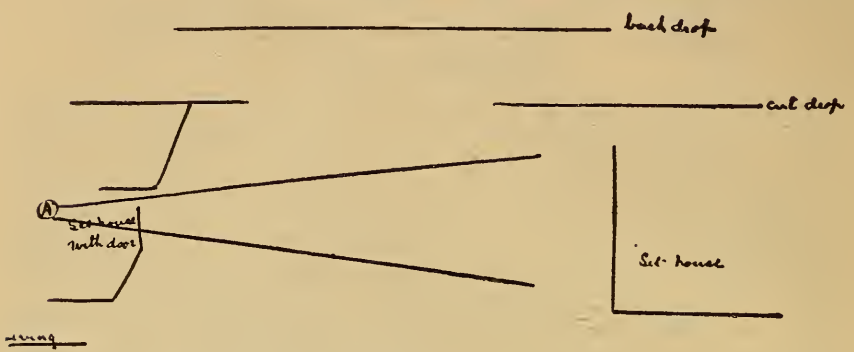
Beginning with entrance of Don John change back border (behind

cut drop) and arcs on back drop gradually to full red ; but do not change other lights. Foots and borders full up white and a little less than half red.

ACT III.—*Scene 3.*

A street.—Midnight.

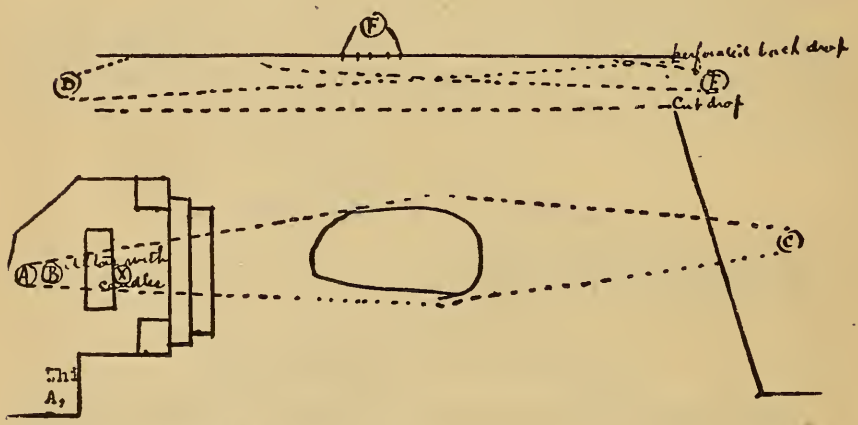
(Shallow set.)



Blues in foots and borders, full up.
A spot light with orange medium behind door of set house R., arranged to throw a beam across stage as door is opened.
No change of lights during scene.
Side props: antique hand lantern for Verges with candle; perforated.

ACT IV.—*Scene 1.*

A church.



White and red foots only.
A Rose pink spot on dimmer and amber.
B Amber and rose pink on dimmer.

C Amber spot light.
D, E } Blue tissue and violet on back drop.
F Strip light, amber, to show through perforations in back drop.
On rise, foots red and white 13 notches.
D and E on back drop, blue.

CHANGES:
As boy with taper comes out and begins to light candles on altar, bring up very gradually on dimmer spots A and B from step-ladder behind altar, one with rose pink medium, the other amber. They are trained to throw a beam three quarters across stage, and cover the same field and are supposed to represent the light of candles from altar, and should not be brought up full till entrance of Friar. As they get about to full, steal on amber spot from fly gallery. This is trained on same field and is merely to lighten shadows from A and B and should blend with their light, not show as separate light.
X Hanging-lamp over altar, with lighted candle in it—or electric.

ACT IV.—*Scene 2.*

A prison.

Blue borders.
Blue and white foots.
No arcs.
No change.
Switch board light trained across stage to strike table R.

ACT V.—*Scene 1.*

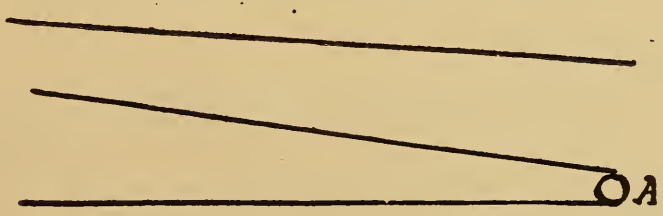
Set same as Act I.—Evening.

Lights placed as in Act I, but with rose pink mediums in A and B and a little red in foots and borders.
Other arcs amber.
No change of lights during scene.

ACT V.—*Scene 2.*

Monument before Leonato's house.—Just before daybreak.

(Front Scene.)



Blue foots and borders with a little white.

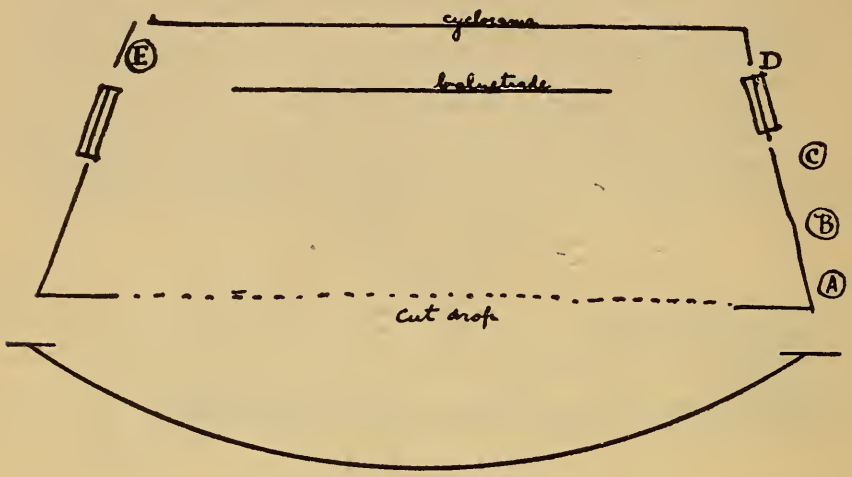
CHANGE :

Just about middle of song bring up on dimmer very gradually—not full up even at end of scene—spot A with rose pink medium trained across stage. It is to represent the first ray of the rising sun, and should *just* show on the actors.

1 red ROMEO AND JULIET lantern for Man 1, with candle.

ACT V.—*Scene 3.*

Courtyard before Leonato's house.—Morning.



Foots red full up.

First border red full up.

A B C Arcs from fly gallery trained across stage *all behind cut drop* with amber mediums.

D E Arcs on back drop white, or very pale straw mediums.

Strips behind balustrade, and behind stairways R. and L., white.

No change.

Much Ado About Nothing

ACT I

WARN music.

Scene.—*Courtyard before* LEONATO'S *House.*—*Afternoon.*

MUSIC.

(*Music on rise; swelling at rise and through opening picture to entrance of* LEONATO; *then pp., to swell again at entrance of* BEATRICE. *Opening picture*—CONRADE, R., *at gate up* C. *pointing off down* R. *as if showing others approaching party of* DON PEDRO. MEN 1, 2 *and* 3 *outside gate;* GIRL C *and* COLUMBINE L. *of gate;* BOY *standing before them;* SERVANT 4 *behind them.* GIRL A *and* GIRL B *on up-stage corner of portico,* L. *All are looking off* R. *through gate. Murmurs of conversation and slight movement from all. Ten seconds after rise,* **enter** *on portico* L., SENESCHAL, *with chain and staff, pointing out* CONRADE *to* LEONATO *behind him. As he appears,* GIRL A *and* GIRL B *go down steps and stand behind* BOY, L. *of gate, and* CONRADE *turns toward portico.* SENESCHAL *goes down steps and* L. C.)

Enter LEONATO, *followed by* ANTONIO, *on porch* L. CONRADE *comes* C. MEN 1, 2 *and* 3 *crowd up into gate to hear.*

MUSIC dim. to pp.

LEON. (*advances to front of portico, consulting letter*). I learn in this letter that Don Pedro of Arragon comes this night to Messina.

CON. (C.). He is very near by this (*going toward gate* C., *and pointing off*): he was not three leagues off when I left him.

(LEON., *followed by* ANT., *comes down steps of porch.* SENESCHAL *motions to* MEN 1, 2 *and* 3 *in gate* C., *and they move outside gate and to* L. CON. *precedes* LEON. *and* ANT. *to gate* C., *and points off* R. *They stand looking off.*)

MUSIC swells.

Enter *on portico* L., BEATRICE *and* HERO *together* (BEAT. *upstage*), *followed by* URSULA *and* MARGARET. *They stand grouped on platform.*

MUSIC dim. and dies away.

(LEON., L., *and* CON., R., *come down stage to* C. *together.* ANT. *goes to* SENESCHAL, *up* L. C., *and gives instructions.*)

LEON. How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?

CON. But few of any sort, and none of name.

LEON. (C.). A victory is twice itself when the achiever brings home full numbers. I find here that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honor on a young Florentine called Claudio.

CON. (C.). Much deserved on his part, and equally remembered by Don Pedro: he hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age; doing, in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion.

BEAT. (*coming down steps to* L. C.). I pray you, is Signior Mountanto returned from the wars or no?

CON. I know none of that name, lady: there was none such in the army of any sort.

LEON. (C.). What is he that you ask for, niece?

HERO (*coming down steps to* BEAT., *and putting her arm about her*). My cousin means Signior Benedick of Padua.

(MARG. *and* URS. *advance a little on platform to dress stage.*)

CON. O, *he's* returned; and as pleasant as ever he was.

BEAT. I pray you, how many hath he killed and eaten in these wars? But how many hath he killed? for indeed, I promised to eat all of his killing.

LEON. Faith, niece, you tax Signior Benedick too much; but he'll be meet with you; I doubt it not.

CON. He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

BEAT. You had musty victual, and he hath help to eat it: he is a very valiant *trencher-man;* he hath an excellent stomach.

CON. And a good soldier too, lady.

BEAT. And a good soldier to a *lady;* but what is he to a *lord?*

CON. A lord to a lord, a man to a man;—stuffed with all honourable virtues.

BEAT. It is so, indeed; he is no less than a stuffed man; but for the stuffing,—well, we are all mortal.

(HERO *puts her hand playfully over* BEAT.'S *mouth to stop her prattle.*)

LEON. You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her: they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

BEAT. Alas! he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man governed with one: so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm (*crossing, with a gesture of mockery, to* R. *and leaning against table* R.), let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse. (HERO *goes to* LEON., C., *who takes her hand affectionately.*) Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn-brother.

CON. Is it possible?

BEAT. Very easily possible: he wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat; it ever changes with the next block.

CON. I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.

BEAT. No! An he were, I would burn my study! But, I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no young squarer now that will make a voyage with him to the devil?

CON. He is most in the company of the right noble Claudio.

BEAT. O Lord! He will hang upon him like a disease! He is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. Heaven help the noble Claudio! If he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pounds ere he be cured.

CON. (*with a smiling bow*). I will hold friends with *you*, lady.

BEAT. (*crossing* C., *and as she passes him, holds out her left hand to* CON. *cordially, and as he retains it she turns*). Do, good friend.

(CON. *bows over* BEAT.'S *hand. When he releases it* BEAT. *goes to down-stage end of steps* L., *where she is joined by* HERO.)

LEON. *You* will never run mad, niece.

READY music.

BEAT. No, not till a hot January.

TRUMPET off R.

(*Music begins pp., and swells to* DON PEDRO'S *entrance.*)

CON. Don Pedro is approached.

(*Goes to gate up* C., *and then* **exit,** R., *as if to meet* DON P. *As* CON. **exits** R., MEN 1, 2 *and* 3 *follow him, and* **exit,** R., *and when off, get in rear of* DON P.'S *procession.* BOY, GIRL A, GIRL B *and* GIRL C, SERVANT 4 *and* COLUMBINE *run through gate up* C., *and group behind it to see approaching procession.* MARG. *and* URS. *come down steps* L., *and get behind* SENESCHAL *and stand* L. *of gate.* BEAT. *and* HERO *go up steps* L. *on to porch and look off* R. LEON. *goes* L., *standing in front of steps* L. ANT. *joins him there. Trumpet nearer. Music swells.* SENESCHAL *goes to gate* C., *and waves back group in gateway. They withdraw up-stage to be out of way of procession, and yet keep in sight.* **Exit** SENESCHAL, R., *to meet procession, and almost immediately reënter, bowing backwards, and stands, bowing, just* L. *of gate* C. *Music ff.*)

Enter DON P. *from* R., *and through gate* C.; *followed by* DON JOHN, L., *and* CLAUDIO, R.; *followed by* CON., L., *and* BENEDICK, R.; *followed by* BORACHIO—*all in full armour.* **Enter,** *following the procession, but remaining outside gate* C., CHOIR MAN X, CHOIR MAN Y *and* CHOIR MAN Z, *in partial armour with standards, etc.; followed by* MAN 1, MAN 2 *and* MAN 3, *with various warlike impediments. All these stand behind gate, where those already outside join them in a dense group.*

(*After* BOR. *has passed the gate,* SENESCHAL *goes outside gate and shuts it from outside, to keep followers out. After a speech or two of the following dialogue those outside the gate, in response to directions from* SENESCHAL, *go off gradually, by twos and threes, followed at last by* SENESCHAL *off* R. U. E. *These* **exits** *are made gradually and quietly so as not to distract attention from the dialogue. As he* **enters,** DON P. *comes* C., *where* LEON. *meets him.* HERO *advances to* L. C. ANT. *and* BEAT., *after bowing to* DON P., *go behind him to up* C., *where they meet* DON J. *and* CLAUD., *to whom* ANT. *presents*

BEAT. BEN. *goes down* R. *to left of table.* BOR. *goes up* L. *to* URS., *and they converse.* CON. *goes up* R.; MARG. *crosses* R. *and meets him, and they converse. After procession has entered music dim., and dies away.*)

STOP music.

DON P. (*meeting* LEON. *up* C., *taking his hand and coming slowly down* C., *speaking as they come down*). Good Signior Leonato, you are come to meet your trouble: the fashion of the world is to avoid cost, and you encounter it.

LEON. Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your Grace: for trouble being gone, comfort should remain; but when *you* depart from me, sorrow abides, and happiness takes his leave.

DON P. (C.). You embrace your charge too willingly. (*Crosses* LEON., L., *and takes* HERO'S *hand* L. C.) I think this is your daughter.

LEON. Her mother hath many times told me so.

BEN. Were you in doubt, sir, that you asked her?

LEON. (*turning to* BEN., *down* R. C., *and giving him both hands, old-man fashion*). Signior Benedick, no; for then were *you* a child. (*Returns* C. *General slight laugh.*)

DON P. You have it full, Benedick: we may guess by this what you are, being a man. Truly, the lady fathers herself. Be happy, lady; for you are like an honourable father.

BEN. If Signior Leonato *be* her father, she would not have his head (*making a gesture to indicate* LEON.'S *beard*) on her shoulders for all Messina, as like him as she is.

(*General slight laugh and movement.* DON P. *and* LEON. *go* L. C., *conversing.* HERO *joins* DON J., CLAUD. *and* ANT., *and group works up* C., *turning away from* BEN. *and* BEAT. DON J. *keeps a little apart from group on its* R. BEN. *goes to chair* R. *of table, and puts foot on it to fix spur.* BEAT. *is thus left alone up* C. *She stands* C, *looking, with a playfully malicious smile, for a moment at* BEN., *who has his back turned, and then she comes down behind table* R.)

BEAT. I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick: nobody marks you.

BEN. (*turning in mock surprise, and bowing very low*). What! My dear Lady Disdain! are you yet living?

BEAT. (*going* C.). Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it, as (*making an exaggerated courtesy*) Signior Benedick?

BEN. (*coming to her* C.). It is certain that I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

BEAT. A dear happiness to women: they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. (*Goes a little* L., *and then turns.*) I thank Heaven and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that: I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

BEN. Heaven keep your ladyship still in that mind! so some gentleman or other shall 'scape a predestinate scratched face.

BEAT. Scratching could not make it worse an (*with a gesture mimicking* BEN.'S *gesture about* LEON.'S *beard, but really referring to* BEN.'S *own beard, which he has evidently grown since she saw him last*) 'twere such a face as yours were.

BEN. (*turning away piqued, with an involuntary hand to his chin; and then turning to her again*). I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer. (*She starts to reply, but he checks her with a gesture, and turns away.*) But keep your way, o' Heaven's name; I have done.

(*Goes* R. *around table as if to rejoin the others.*)

BEAT. (*calling after him*). You always end with a jade's trick: I know you of old.

(BEN. *pauses half angrily, as if to reply, and then with a gesture to signify that he gives up the contest, goes up* C. *and joins the group there.* BEAT. *watches him up, and then smiling triumphantly to herself goes* L. C.)

DON P. (*coming down* C., *arm in arm with* LEON., *who is on his right*). That is the sum of all, Leonato. (*Calls back.*) Signior Claudio and Signior Benedick (CLAUD. *comes down to* R. *of* LEON. BEN. *comes down on* R. *of* CLAUD. HERO *joins* BEAT., *down* L. DON J. *comes down on* R. *of table,* R.), my dear friend Leonato hath invited you all. I tell him we shall stay here at the least a month; and he heartily prays some occasion may detain us longer. I dare swear he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart.

LEON. If you swear, my lord, you shall not be forsworn.

(*To* DON J.) Let me bid you welcome, my lord: being reconciled to the prince your brother, I owe you all duty.

DON J. I thank you: I am not of many words, but I thank you. (*Turns away up* R., *and works over* C.)

LEON. Please it your Grace lead on?

DON P. Your hand, Leonato; we will go together.

(**General exit**, *except* BEN. *and* CLAUD., *up steps and into house* L., LEON. *and* DON P. *together. By rank* DON J. *should follow, but he bows to* BEAT. *and* HERO, *and they precede him and* **exit** *into house* L. **Exit** DON J. *into house* L. **Exit** MARG. *and* CON. *up steps* R. *and* **exit** *into garden.* **Exit** URS. *and* BOR. *into house* L. BEN. *crosses and meets* ANT. L. C., *and they go up steps* L., *as if to exit.* CLAUD. *crosses* R. *to* L. *of table down* R., *and facing away from house, begins pensively to trace patterns on the table top with his finger.* **Exit** ANT. *into house* L. *As* BEN. *reaches door of house on platform* L., *he turns and sees* CLAUD., *looks at him quizzically for a moment, and then quietly steals down and claps him on both shoulders from behind to wake him from his day-dream.*)

CLAUD. (*starts; turns and sees* BEN., *and, seizing both* BEN.'S *hands*). Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signior Leonato?

BEN. (*withdraws his hands from* CLAUD.'S *pointedly, as if the subject were a suspicious one, and steps back: and then*). I noted her not; but I looked on her.

CLAUD. (*crossing* BEN. L. *toward house to* C.). Is she not a modest young lady?

BEN. (L. C., *looking after him, with a quizzical pause*). Do you question me, as an honest man should do, for my simple true judgment? or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?

CLAUD. (C., *turning, with a gesture of boyish appeal*). No; I pray thee speak in sober judgment.

BEN. (*lazily crossing and sitting in seat down* L. *during speech, facing* L. *away from* CLAUD.). Why, i' faith, methinks she's too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise: only this commendation I can afford her, that were she other than she is, she were unhandsome; and being no other but as she is—I do not like her.

CLAUD. (*coming down* L. *behind* BEN., *and putting his hands*

on BEN.'S *shoulders confidentially*). Thou thinkest I am in sport: I pray thee tell me truly how thou likest her.

BEN. (*sitting up sharply*). Would you buy her, that you inquire after her?

CLAUD. (*going* C.). Can the world buy such a jewel?

BEN. (*turning in seat, in wonder, toward* CLAUD.: *then*). Yea, and a case to put it into! But speak you this with a sad brow? or do you play the flouting Jack? (*Rising and going to* CLAUD., C.) Come, in what key shall a man take you, to go in the song?

CLAUD. In mine eye she is the sweetest lady that ever I looked on.

BEN. (*looking after* HERO, *and then turning*). I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such matter: there's her cousin, an she were not possessed with a fury, exceeds her as much in beauty as the first of May doth the last of December. But I hope you have no intent to turn husband, have you?

CLAUD. I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.

(*Goes to* L. *of table* R., *turning from* BEN.)

BEN. (C.). Is't come to this, in faith? Hath not the world one man but he will wear his cap with suspicion? Shall I never see a bachelor of threescore again? (*Crossing* CLAUD. *and going to* R. *of table* R.) Go to i' faith; an thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it, and sigh away Sundays. (*Turns and sees* DON P. *coming from house* L.) Look; Don Pedro is returned to seek you.

Enter DON P. *on porch* L.

DON P. (*on porch* L.). What secret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonato's?

(CLAUD. *goes* C., *making gesture of silence to* BEN.)

BEN. I would your Grace would constrain me to tell.

DON P. I charge thee on thy allegiance. (*Comes down steps* L.)

BEN. You hear, Count Claudio: I can be secret as a dumb man; but, on my *allegiance*, mark you this, on my *allegiance!* (CLAUD. *dashes at* BEN., R. C., *and struggles with him, playfully, boyishly, to prevent him from speaking.* BEN. *shouting to* DON P. *in a stage whisper over* CLAUD.'S *head.*) He is in

love. With who? (Now that is your Grace's part.) Mark how short his answer is;—With Hero, Leonato's short daughter.

CLAUD. (*giving up, and turning* C.). If this were so, so were it uttered.

BEN. Like the old tale, my lord: "It is not so, nor 'twas not so, but indeed Heaven forbid it should be so."

CLAUD. If my passion change not shortly, Heaven forbid it should be otherwise.

DON P. (*crossing to* CLAUD., C., *and putting both hands on his shoulders, affectionately*). Amen, if you love her; for the lady is very well worthy.

CLAUD. You speak this to fetch me in, my lord.

DON P. By my troth, I speak my thought.

CLAUD. And, in faith, my lord, I spoke mine.

BEN. And, by my two faiths and troths, my lord, I spoke mine.

CLAUD. That I love her, I feel.

DON P. That she is worthy, I know.

BEN. That I neither feel how she should be loved, nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me: I will die in it at the stake.

DON P. Thou wast ever an obstinate heretic in the despite of beauty.

BEN. (*crossing* L. *on this speech to seat down* L.). That a woman conceived me, I thank her; that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks: but that I will have a recheat winded in my forehead, all women shall pardon me. Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine is,—for the which I may go the finer,—(*sinking in seat down* L. *and stretching his legs out lazily*) I will live a bachelor.

(CLAUD. *goes to table* R. *and leans on chair behind it.*)

DON P. (*going to table* R. *and sitting on it*). I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.

BEN. (*rising in indignant, scornful protest*). With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord; not with love! Prove that ever I lose more blood with love than I will get again with drinking,—pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen, and hang me up at the door of a wine-house for the sign of blind Cupid.

DON P. Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable argument.

BEN. If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat, and shoot at me.

DON P. Well, as time shall try: (*Sings mockingly.*) "In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke."

BEN. (*working toward* C. *during speech*). The savage bull may; but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns, and set them in my forehead: and let me be vilely painted; and in such great letters as they write "Here is good horse to hire," let them signify under my sign "Here you may see Benedick the married man."

DON P. (*rising and going* C.). Well, you will temporize with the hours. In the meantime, good Signior Benedick, repair to Leonato: commend me to him, and tell him I will not fail him at supper; for indeed he hath made great preparation.

BEN. I have almost matter enough in me for such an embassage; (*goes up steps to house* L.) "and so I commit you"——

CLAUD. "To the tuition of Heaven: From my house," (if I had it)——

DON P. "The sixth of July: Your loving friend, Benedick."

BEN. (*turning on platform*). Nay, mock not, mock not. Ere you flout old ends any further, examine your conscience: and so I leave you.

Exit *into house* L.

CLAUD. (*going to* DON P.). My liege, your highness now may do me good:

DON P. (C.). My love is thine to teach: teach it but how,
And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn
Any hard lesson that may do thee good.

CLAUD. Hath Leonato any son, my lord?

DON P. No child but Hero; she's his only heir.—
Dost thou affect her, Claudio?

CLAUD. O, my lord
When you went onward on this ended action,
I looked upon her with a soldier's eye,
That liked, but had a rougher task in hand
Than to drive liking to the name of love:
But now I am return'd, and that war-thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying, I liked her ere I went to wars,—

DON P. (*interrupting him, half mockingly*). Thou wilt be
like a lover presently,
And tire the hearer with a book of words.

(CLAUD., *abashed, turns* R. *and goes to table down* R. DON P. *looks at him for a moment, and then comes behind him and takes him by the shoulders affectionately.*)

If those dost love fair Hero, cherish it;

WARN curtain.

And I will break with her and with her father,
And thou shalt have her. Was 't not to this end
That thou began'st to twist so fine a story?

(*Twists* CLAUD. *round.*)

CLAUD. (*turning and seizing* DON P.'S *hands, and swinging around him in front of him so that he is* L. *of* DON P. *During this speech he gradually draws* DON P. C.).
How sweetly you do minister to love,
That know love's grief by his complexion!
But lest my liking might too sudden seem,
I would have salved it with a longer treatise.

DON P. What need the bridge much broader than the flood?
Look, what will serve is fit: 'tis once, thou lovest,
And I will fit thee with the remedy.
I know we shall have revelling to-night:
I will assume thy part, in some disguise,
And tell fair Hero I am Claudio;
And in her bosom I'll unclasp my heart,
And take her hearing prisoner with the force
And strong encounter of my amorous tale:
Then, after, to her father will I break;
And the conclusion is,—she shall be thine!

CURTAIN

ACT II.

WARN music.

Scene.—LEONATO'S *garden.*—*Evening.*

MUSIC.

(*Music for curtain—a few bars only which stop as soon as curtain is up. After a moment's pause a faint burst of singing from off* L., *as if from house, and a ripple of laughter—both very faint and distant, and dying away after a few seconds.*)

Enter *down the stairs from terrace up* L., DON J. *On the stairs he turns back toward the merrymakers, off, with a shrug of bored, sour disgust, and comes down* C., *slowly, in meditation. As* DON J. *reaches* C., **enter,** *from terrace up* L., *as if following him,* CON.

CON. What the good-year, my lord! why are you thus out of measure sad? You should hear reason.

DON J. (*going* R., *and seating himself gloomily on bench by arbor,* R.). And when I have heard it, what blessing brings it?

CON. (C.). If not a present remedy, at least a patient sufferance.

DON J. I cannot hide what I am. (*Rising impatiently and crossing* L., *to round seat down* L.) I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests; eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure; sleep when I am drowsy, and tend on no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw no man in his humor.

(*Seats himself on round bench down* L.)

CON. (*moving down* L. C.). Yea, but you must not make the full show of this till you may do it without controlment. You have 'til late stood out against your brother, and he hath ta'en you newly into his grace; where it is impossible you should take true root but by the fair weather that you make yourself.

DON J. I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in

his grace; and it better fits my blood to be disdained of all than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any. (*Springing up and going* C.) I am trusted with a muzzle and enfranchised with a clog; therefore I have decreed not to sing in my cage. If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking: in the meantime, let me be what I am, and seek not to alter me.

(*Crosses* CON., R., *as if to enter arbor* R.)

CON. (*coming down* L.). Can you make no use of your discontent?

DON J. (*stopping and turning at entrance to arbor to answer*). I make all use of it, for I use it only. (*Sees* BOR. *off up steps* L.) Who comes here? (**Enter** BOR., *down steps* L. U. E.) What news, Borachio?

BOR. (*coming down* C.). I came yonder from the supper: and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

DON J. (*going toward* BOR., C.). Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a fool that betroths himself to unquietness?

BOR. Marry, it is your brother's right hand.

DON J. Who? the most exquisite Claudio?

BOR. Even he.

DON J. A proper squire! (*Turns* R., *as if to go into arbor, and then checking himself.*) Which way looks he?

BOR. Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

DON J. A very forward March-chick! (*Sits on bench by arbor* R.) How came you to this?

BOR. (R. C.). As I was smoking a musty room, comes to me the prince and Claudio, hand in hand in sad conference: I whipt me behind the arras; and there heard it agreed upon, that the prince should woo Hero for himself, and having obtained her, give her to Count Claudio.

DON J. Come, this may prove food to my displeasure. (*Rises and goes* C. *between* BOR. *and* CON. *They both approach* C.) That young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow: if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way. You are both sure, and will assist me?

CON. To the death, my lord.

(BEAT. *and* HERO *heard laughing off*, L. U. E. DON J. *makes gesture of silence.*)

Exit DON J. *into arbor and off* R. **Exit** BOR. *and* CON., *following him.*

(*Laughter from* BEAT. *and* HERO *nearer.*)

Enter *down steps* L. U. E., BEAT. *dragging* LEON. *by her right hand and* ANT. *by her left. All are laughing. They are closely followed by* HERO *who is pushing* ANT., *and the old men are hanging back, as if* BEAT. *were dragging them into some tomboy prank.*

LEON. (*up* C., *uttering the line as if an excuse for checking* BEAT.'S *fooling*). Was not that Count John?

(BEAT. *immediately becomes exaggeratedly proper and goes down* R. *to look after* DON J.)

ANT. (*up* L.). I saw him not.

BEAT. (*glancing off* R. *through opening in arbor, and with a little shuddering grimace to indicate* DON J.'S *sourness*). How tartly the gentleman looks! I never can see him but I am heart-burned an hour after.

HERO (*going to round seat down* L. C., *and sitting, back to audience, looking after* DON J.). He *is* of a very melancholy disposition.

BEAT. (C.). He were an excellent man that were made just in the midway between him and Benedick: the one is too like an image and says nothing, and the other too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

(ANT. *goes* L. C.)

LEON. (*coming down toward bench by arbor* R.). Then half Signior Benedick's tongue in Count John's mouth, and half Count John's melancholy in Signior Benedick's face ——

BEAT. (C.). With a good leg and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world—if he could get her good-will.

LEON. (*sitting on bench by arbor* R.). By my troth, niece, thou wilt *never* get *thee* a husband, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.

BEAT. For the which blessing I am upon my knees every morning and evening. Lord, I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face: I had rather lie in the woolen.

LEON. You may light on a husband that hath no beard.

BEAT. What should I do with him? Dress him in my apparel, and make him my waiting gentlewoman? He that hath a beard is more than a youth; and he that hath no beard is less than a man: and he that is more than a youth is not for me; and he that is less than a man,—I am not for him.

(*Goes up* C., *as if to look off steps up* L.)

ANT. (*coming to* HERO *at round seat down* L. C.). Well, niece, I trust *you* will be ruled by your father.

BEAT. (*up* C., *turning*). Yes, faith; it is my cousin's duty to make courtesy, and say (*with a deep courtesy to* LEON.), "Father, as it please you." But yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another courtesy, and say (*turning her back pointedly to* LEON. *and sweeping away from him*), "Father, as it please me."

LEON. (*laughingly*). Well, niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.

BEAT. (C.). Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be overmastered with a piece of valiant dust? to make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I'll none: Adam's sons are my brethren; and, truly, I hold it a sin to match in my kindred. (*Goes up* L. C.)

ANT. Niece, remember that I told *you*.

BEAT. (*coming down* C., *and teasingly to* HERO). The fault will be in the music, cousin, if *you* be not wooed in good time.

READY music.

(HERO *springs up and dashes at* BEAT., C., *to stop her mouth.* BEAT. *runs down and dodges around in front of round seat down* L. C. *to fountain* L., *where she holds* HERO *off by threatening to dash her with water.* HERO *stands* C., *clutching her skirts around her.*) If the wooer be too importunate, tell him there is a measure in everything, and so dance out the answer. (*With a gesture of despair*, HERO *crosses to* LEON., *on bench* R., *and standing behind him stops his ears against* BEAT.'S *prattle.* BEAT. *comes* C.) For, hear me, Hero: wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace; the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly-modest, as a measure, full of state and ancientry; and then comes repentance, and, with his bad legs, falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave.

(*During this speech* BEAT. *works down from* C. *to* R. *before down-stage entrance to arbor.*)

LEON. (*rising and going* C., *accompanied by* HERO). Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly.

BEAT. I have a good eye, uncle; (*with finger to eye and slight wink*) I can see a church by daylight.

MUSIC.

(*Distant music of dance, and laughter of approaching dancers heard off* L. U. E.)

LEON. The revellers are entering.

(LEON., ANT. *and* HERO *go up* L. *toward* L. U. E. *to watch approach of revellers.* BEAT. *goes into arbor and kneels on seat there, looking out through opening* L. *Music swells.*)

Enter *from* L. U. E., *down steps, cloaked and masked,* CLAUD. *and* BEN., *who join* LEON., ANT. *and* HERO *up* C. *As other revellers* **enter,** BEAT. *goes up through arbor and joins this group. Music swells.*

Enter *in pairs, from* L. U. E., *down steps,* (1) HARLEQUIN *and* COLUMBINE; (2) BALTHASAR *and* MARG.; (3) MAN 1 *and* GIRL A; (4) MAN 2 *and* GIRL B; (5) MAN 3 *and* GIRL C; (6) DON P. *and* URS.

(*The men have cloaks and masks, and each pair carries a standard with two lanterns hanging from it. The procession dancing, comes down* C., *then turns* R. *into down-stage entrance to arbor, and off through arbor* R. *As* DON P. *and* URS. *reach foot of steps* L. U. E., *they fall out of procession, and join* LEON.'S *group. As last pair in procession* (MAN 3 *and* GIRL C) *gets about to bench by arbor,* DON P. *leads* HERO *down* C., *speaking through the music, which grows dim. with exit of dancers.*)

DON P. (*coming down* C.). Lady, will you walk about with your friend?

HERO (*coming down* C.). So you walk softly, and look sweetly, and say nothing, I am yours for the walk; and especially (*releasing her hand playfully, and turning* R. *as if to follow dancers*) when I walk away.

DON P. (*pursuing and catching her* R. C., *drawing her arm through his and leading her* L.). With me in your company?

(*During the following lines, they work slowly* L., *going in front of round seat down* L. C.)

HERO. I may say so, when I please.

DON P. And when please you to say so?

HERO. When I like your favor; (*seating herself, playfully, on round seat down* L. C., *as if to go no further*) for Heaven defend the lute should be like the case!

DON P. My visor is Philemon's roof; (*drawing her up again*) within the house is Jove.

HERO. Why, then, your visor should be thatched.

DON P. Speak low if you speak love.

Exeunt HERO *and* DON P. *up steps* L. 1 E.

(*A burst of laughter from group up* C., *and* URS. *drags* ANT., *protesting, down* C., *and off through arbor* R. *to join dancers.* CLAUD. *and* LEON., *applauding, go through up-stage entrance to arbor and follow them off* R.)

MUSIC dim. and stops.

BEAT. (*leaving* BEN. *angrily, as if stung by some remark of his, coming down, and turning toward front entrance to arbor* R., *as if to exit, then, pausing*). Will you not tell me who told you so?

BEN. (*smiling and strolling nonchalantly down toward round seat, down* L. C., *as if pleased with the success of his shot*). No, you shall pardon me.

BEAT. Nor will you not tell me who you are?

BEN. (*seating himself lazily on seat*). Not now.

BEAT. That I was "disdainful," and that "I had my *good* wit" out of the "Hundred Merry Tales";—(*crossing quickly to* C., *above him, and with sparkling maliciousness*) well, this was Signior Benedick that said so.

BEN. (*sitting up*). What's he?

BEAT. I am sure you know him well enough.

BEN. Not I, believe me.

READY music.

BEAT. Did he never make you laugh?

BEN. (*pleased at this attribution of wit*). I pray you, what is he?

BEAT. (*coming down behind him and stabbing him merrily with every word*). Why, he is the prince's jester: a very dull fool; his only gift is in devising impossible slanders: none but libertines delight in him; and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villainy; for he both pleases men and angers them, and then they laugh at him and—beat him.

BEN. When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say.

(*Rising, stung, as if to go off* L. U. E., *but pausing as* BEAT. *answers.*)

MUSIC.

(*Music of reëntering dancers heard pp. off* R., *and swells till entrance of dancers.*)

BEAT. (*coming down* C., *eagerly*). Do, *do:* he'll but break a comparison or two on me; which, peradventure not marked or not laughed at, strikes him into melancholy; and then there's a partridge wing saved, for the fool will eat no supper that night. (*Seeing that her taunt has annoyed* BEN., *and determined to tease him further, holds out her hand to compel him to take her as a partner in the dance, music of which is heard approaching off* R.) We must follow the leaders.

(BEN. *cannot in politeness refuse her as a partner, and with dismayed reluctance takes her hand, and* **exit** *with her through front entrance of arbor and off* R.)

(*A moment after exit of* BEN. *and* BEAT., *during which music swells,* **enter** DANCERS *from* R. U. E., *behind arbor, in same order and pairs as before:* (1) HARLEQUIN *and* COLUMBINE; (2) BALTH. *and* MARG.; (3) MAN 1 *and* GIRL A; (4) MAN 2 *and* GIRL B; (5) MAN 3 *and* GIRL C; (6) ANT. *and* URS; (7) BEN. *and* BEAT.)

DANCE

(HARLEQUIN *and* COLUMBINE *lead the procession—all to dance steps—back up* C. *nearly to cut drop, then turn and come down* C.; *then turn* L. *and going around round seat down* L. *cross stage* R., *and enter arbor, through front entrance. Meantime the various couples drop off and form sets for the figure as follows: As procession turns down* C., *the last two couples*—ANT. *and* URS., BEN. *and* BEAT.—*drop*

off, and form set up C. *As procession turns at* L. C. MAN 2–GIRL B *and* MAN 3–GIRL C *drop off and form set* L. C. *Before entrance to arbor,* BALTH.–MARG. *and* MAN 1–GIRL A *form set down* R. C. HARLEQUIN *and* COLUMBINE *continue through arbor and join set up* C., *who dance figure around them; then go to set* L. C., *same business; then go to set down* R. C., *same business.* HARLEQUIN *and* COLUMBINE *then go through arbor, and as they enter it, the down* R. *set follows, the* L. *set crosses and follows, the up* C. *set comes down and follows, thus reforming procession in same order as entrance.*)

Exit HARLEQUIN *and* COLUMBINE, *leading this procession through arbor and off* L. U. E. *up steps. Music pp.*

Enter *during dance from* R. U. E., *behind arbor,* LEON. *and* CLAUD., *and stand up* R. C. *watching.* **Enter** *on steps* L. U. E., SENESCHAL, BOY *and* SERVANT 4, *and stand. During dance* LEON. *and* CLAUD. *cross* L. *to steps* L. U. E., *going behind up-stage set of dancers, and* LEON. *gives directions to* SENESCHAL. *Before end of dance* **exit** *up steps* L. U. E., LEON., *followed by* SENESCHAL, BOY *and* SERVANT 4. *As last dancers* **exit**, CLAUD., *who has been left alone up* L. C., *comes down* L., *and leans over fountain basin turned from arbor. As last dancers* **exit**, **enter** DON J. *and* BOR. *into arbor from* R. 2 E. *A pause.*)

MUSIC dies away.

DON J. (*coming through down-stage entrance to arbor, looking off after dancers, and to* BOR., *who follows him*). Sure my brother is amorous on Hero, and hath withdrawn her father to break with him about it. (*Seeing* CLAUD.) But one visor remains.

BOR. (*down* R.). And that is Claudio: I know him by his bearing.

DON J. (R. C., *after a significant glance at* BOR., *and going* C. *as he speaks*). Are not you Signior Benedick?

CLAUD. (*masking and turning with a smile at the success of his disguise, and advancing* L. C.). You know me well; I am he.

DON J. (*going to* CLAUD., L. C., *and confidentially*). Signior, you are very near my brother in his love; he is enamored

on Hero; I pray you, dissuade him from her: she is no equal for his birth: you may do the part of an honest man in it.

CLAUD. How know you he loves her?

DON J. I heard him swear his affection.

BOR. (*advancing*). So did I, too; and he swore he would marry her.

(CLAUD., *unable to hide his emotions, crosses rapidly* R. *to entrance to arbor, as if to exit, but halts at entrance.*)

DON J. (*after a pause, and a significant glance at* CLAUD. *and* BOR.). Come, let us to the banquet.

Exeunt DON J. *and* BOR., L. U. E., *up-stairs.*

CLAUD. (*at entrance to arbor*). Thus answer I in name of Benedick,
But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio.

(*Sinks on bench beside arbor. A moment's pause.*)

'Tis certain so; the prince woos for himself.
Friendship is constant in all other things
Save in the office and affairs of love:

(*Rising and going* C., *and with a glance off* L.)

Therefore all hearts in love use their own tongue;
Let every eye negotiate for itself,
And trust no agent; for beauty is a witch,
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.
This is an accident of hourly proof,
Which I mistrusted not. Farewell, therefore, Hero!

(*Hears* BEN. *approaching* L. U. E., *masks and crosses* R., *as if to exit into arbor.*)

Reënter BEN., *unmasked, down-stairs* L. U. E.

BEN. Count Claudio?

CLAUD. (*stopping and turning*). Yea, the same.

BEN. (*coming down, taking* CLAUD. *by left arm, and drawing him a little* C.). Come, will you go with me?

CLAUD. (C.). Whither?

BEN. (C.). Even to the next willow, about your own business, county. What fashion will you wear the garland of? about your neck, like an usurer's chain? or under your arm,

like a lieutenant's scarf? (CLAUD. *breaks away and crosses in front of* BEN. *angrily to fountain* L.) You *must* wear it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.

CLAUD. I wish him joy of her.

BEN. (*crossing* L. *to behind* CLAUD., *at fountain*). Why, that's spoken like an honest drovier; so they sell bullocks. But did you think the prince would have served you thus?

CLAUD. I pray you, leave me.

BEN. Ho! now you strike like the blind man; 'twas the boy that stole your meat, and you'll beat the post.

CLAUD. If it will not be, I'll leave *you*.

Exit CLAUD., *up-stairs down* L.

BEN. Alas, poor hurt fowl! now will he creep into sedges. (*A pause. Goes meditatively and sits on round bench down* L.) But, that my lady Beatrice should know me, and not know me! The prince's fool! Ha? It may be I go under that title because I am merry. (*Pause.*) Yea, but so I *am* apt to do myself wrong. (*Rising and going* R. C.) I am *not* so reputed: it is the base, the bitter, disposition of Beatrice that puts the world into her person, and so gives me out. (*Pause: then turning at* R. *as if to exit* L.) Well, I'll be revenged as I may.

Reënter DON P. *from steps up* L. U. E.

DON P. (*coming down* C. *and meeting* BEN. C.). Now, signior, where's the count? did you see him?

BEN. Troth, my lord, I have played the part of Lady Fame. I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren: I told him, and I think I told him true, that your Grace had got the good will of his young lady; and I offered him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipped.

DON P. To be whipped! What's his fault?

BEN. The flat transgression of a schoolboy, who, being overjoyed with finding a bird's nest, shows it to his companion, and he steals it.

DON P. Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? The transgression is in the stealer.

BEN. Yet it had not been amiss the rod had been made, and the garland too; for the garland he might have worn himself, and the rod he might have bestowed on you, who, as I take it, have stolen his bird's nest.

DON P. (*crossing* BEN., R., *and sitting on arbor bench* R.). I will but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner.

BEN. If their singing answer your saying, by my faith, you say honestly.

(*Strolls over toward fountain* L.)

DON P. The Lady Beatrice hath a quarrel to you: (BEN. *turns sharply*) the gentleman that danced with her told her she is much wronged by you.

BEN. (*coming* C.). O, *she* misused *me* past the endurance of a block! an oak but with one green leaf on it would have answered her; my very *visor* began to assume life and scold with her. (*Takes an angry turn up* C., *and then down again.*) She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the prince's jester, that I was duller than a great thaw; huddling jest upon jest, with such impossible conveyance, upon me, that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me. (*Goes to round bench down* L. *and sits.*) She speaks poniards, and every word stabs. (*Starting up again, and pacing up and down angrily.*) I would not marry her, though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgressed. I would to Heaven some scholar would conjure her; for certainly while she is here, a man may live as quiet in hell as in a sanctuary; and people sin upon purpose, because they would go thither; so, indeed, all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follows her. (*Down* C.)

(BEAT. *heard laughing off* L. 1 E.)

DON P. (*looking off* L. 1 E.). Look, here she comes.

(BEN., *as if to hide, crosses rapidly* R. *toward arbor. As he passes,* DON P. *springs up, catches his left arm and detains him.*)

BEN. Will your Grace command me any service to the world's end? (DON P. *drags him* C.) I will go on the slightest errand now to the Antipodes that you can devise to send me on; I will fetch you a toothpicker now from the furthest inch of Asia; bring you the length of Prester John's foot; fetch you a hair off the great Cham's beard; do you any embassage to the Pigmies; rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy. You have no employment for me?

DON P. None, but to desire your good company.

BEN. O Lord, sir, here's a dish I love not (*breaks away from* DON P.): I cannot endure my Lady Tongue.

Exit *hastily into arbor and off* R.

Enter BEAT. *with* CLAUD. *on her left arm down staircase* L. I E. *She goes* L. C. CLAUD. *stands* L. *of round bench down* L.

DON P. (R. C.). Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of Signior Benedick. (BEAT. *shrugs her shoulders.* DON P. *turns to* CLAUD.) Why, how now, count! wherefore are you sad?

CLAUD. (*going up* L. C. *toward* BEAT.). Not sad, my lord.

DON P. How then? sick?

CLAUD. Neither, my lord.

BEAT. (C.). The count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but civil count, civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion.

DON P. I' faith, lady, I think your blazon to be true; though I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false. (Enter *down steps* L. I E., LEON., *leading* HERO, *on his left. They stop down* L.) Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won: I have broke with her father, and his good will obtained: name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy!

LEON. (L., *handing* HERO *across toward* CLAUD., C.). Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes: his Grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it.

(CLAUD. *comes to* L. C. *and meets* HERO, *who has moved a step to meet him, and taking her hands, he gazes at her in silence.*)

BEAT. (*up* C.). Speak, count, 'tis your cue.

CLAUD. (L. C.). Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy, if I could say how much. Lady, as you are mine, I am yours: I give away myself for you, and dote upon the exchange.

(*Another silence.*)

BEAT. Speak, cousin; or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let not him speak neither.

(HERO *makes a little shame-faced gesture of protest against* BEAT.'S *fooling; and* CLAUD. *leads her* R. *to bench by arbor where they sit.*)

DON P. (*going up* L. *toward* BEAT.). In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

BEAT. (*coming* L. C.). Yea, my lord; I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care. (*Points to the lovers, makes gesture of silence and pretends to attempt to overhear their conversation.*) My cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

CLAUD. And so she doth, cousin.

(*Rises pointedly and leads* HERO *into arbor* R. *where they sit on bench inside.*)

(BEAT., DON P. *and* LEON. *laugh.*)

BEAT. Good Lord, for alliances! Thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sun-burnt; I may sit in a corner, and cry heigh-ho for a husband!

DON P. Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

BEAT. I would rather have one of your father's getting. Hath your Grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

DON P. Will you have me, lady?

BEAT. (*with a deep, mocking courtesy to him*). No, my lord, unless I might have another for working-days: your Grace is too costly to wear every day. But, I beseech your Grace, pardon me (*holding out her hand to him impulsively*); I was born to speak all mirth and no matter.

DON P. (*taking* BEAT.'S *outstretched hand and bending over it*). Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for, out of question, you were born in a merry hour.

BEAT. No, sure, my lord, my mother cried; but then there was a star danced, and under that was I born. (*With a sign to the others, creeps to on-stage window of arbor, lays her fan on low plants under it, and playfully pushes the lovers' heads together, crying.*) Cousins, God give you joy!

(*Runs off up stage, and* exit *up steps* L. U. E., *leaving her fan behind.*)

LIGHTS down.

(*After exit of* BEAT. *begin to dim. moonlights slowly till they are all off by exit of* HERO, DON P., *etc.*)

(DON P. *and* LEON. *laugh.*)

DON P. (*looking after her*). By my troth, a pleasant-spirited lady.

LEON. (*sitting on* L. *side of round bench down* L.). There's little of the melancholy element in her, my lord: she is never sad but when she sleeps; and not ever sad then; for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamed of unhappiness, and waked herself with laughing.

DON P. (*crosses, meditating, and sits* R. *of* LEON. *on round bench, down* L.). She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband.

LEON. O, by no means: she mocks all her wooers out of suit.

DON P. She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

LEON. (*with hands up in amazement*). O Lord, my lord, if they were but a week married, they would talk themselves mad.

DON P. (*calling across to arbor*). County Claudio. (CLAUD. *and* HERO *rise and appear in doorway of arbor.* CLAUD., R., HERO, L.) When mean you to go to church?

CLAUD. (*leaving* HERO, R. C.). To-morrow, my lord: time goes on crutches till love have all his rites.

LEON. Not till Monday, my dear son; and a time too brief, too, to have all things answer my mind.

DON P. Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing: but, I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us. I will, in the interim, undertake one of Hercules' labours; which is, to bring Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection the one with the other. (LEON. *rises amazed.*) I would fain have it a match; and I doubt not but to fashion it (*rising and going* C.), if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

LEON. (*going to* DON P.). My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights' watchings.

CLAUD. (*crossing* HERO L. *to* DON P.). And I, my lord.

DON P. And you too, gentle Hero?

HERO (*down* R. C.). I will do any modest office, my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband.

DON P. And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know. Thus far can I praise him; he is of a noble strain, of approved valour, and confirmed honesty. I will teach you

how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedick; and I, with your two helps will so practice on Benedick, that, in despite of his quick wit and his quesy stomach, he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer: his glory shall be ours (*grasping* LEON. *by one hand and* CLAUD. *by the other*), for *we* (*raising their hands*) are the only love-gods. (*The others look at him in amazement, and he is about to explain his plan further, and they gather together to hear, when noise and laughter of departing guests is heard off* L. U. E. **Enter** SENESCHAL *down steps* L. U. E., *followed by* BOY.) Go in with me and I will tell you my drift.

READY bell to strike.

Exeunt *by steps down* L. I E., DON P., LEON., HERO *and* CLAUD.

DOWN lights.

(SENESCHAL *comes* C., *and by a gesture, orders* BOY *to open big gates down* R. I E. BOY *crosses and does so, and remains outside holding gate open.*)

Enter, *laughing and talking, down steps* L. U. E., *two groups of departing guests, carrying lanterns* (*not the lanterns used in the dance but more serviceable affairs, to light themselves home by*). *First Group consists of* GIRL A, MAN 1 *and* GIRL B *and* MAN 2. *The* SENESCHAL *precedes this group across stage to gate* R. I E., *and stands in front of arbor bowing them out. They* **exit** R. I E. *As this group crosses,* **enter,** *down step,* L. U. E., *Second Group, consisting of* MAN 3, GIRL C; CHOIR MEN X, Y *and* Z; *and* HARLEQUIN, COLUMBINE *in guest costumes—if they have not time to change omit them.*

(*Second group crosses and* **exits** *at gate* R. I E. *During these exits, and concealed by them,* DON J. **enters** *arbor from* R. *and sits on bench inside hidden from audience.* BOY *comes inside gates and closes them.* SENESCHAL *goes to gate and locks it with large key.*)

Enter SERVANT 4 *down steps* L. U. E., *and puts out—or takes away—all lamps by back drop.* BOY *goes into arbor and extinguishes lamps hanging there.* SENESCHAL *crosses to* L. *and puts out all lamps on that side of the stage. Then* **exeunt,** *up-stairs,* L. I E., SENESCHAL, SERVANT 4 *and*

BOY. *Meantime, as each guest who carries a lantern* **exits**, *and as each on-stage lamp is extinguished, check all lights. As last lamp is extinguished, the lights are almost black, the middle border entirely out, and only a glimmer in the back border and foots. A long pause: then the house bell, off* L., *tolls once, to denote that house is*

BELL.

closed for the night. After another pause, DON J. *rises quietly and comes slowly to down-stage entrance to arbor, and stands there in meditation. N. B. The stage should now be so dark that his figure is just distinguishable, but no more. Pause.*

Enter *quietly on steps* L. U. E., BOR., *who, since his last exit* R., *has crossed stage behind back drop, with lighted lantern hidden under his cloak. Stands for a moment on steps listening, and then cautiously raises the lantern above his head, and shading his eyes with his hand looks about garden. The light should strike his face so that he is recognized by the audience. As* BOR. *flashes lantern, check remaining lights, so that they can go dead out when lantern is blown out. Seeing no one,* BOR. *cloaks lantern again and is about to retire* L. U. E., *when* DON J. *says quietly, "Borachio." BOR., still hiding the light, crosses to him* R.

DON J. (*at entrance to arbor* R.). It is so; the Count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

BOR. Yea, my lord, but I can cross it.

(DON J. *crossing* BOR. *to* L. *to round seat down* L.)

DON J. Any bar, any cross, any impediment will be medicinable to me: whatsoever comes athwart his affection ranges evenly with mine. (*Sits on round seat down* L. *front.*) How canst thou cross this marriage?

BOR. (*following* DON J., L.). Not honestly, my lord; but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

DON J. Show me briefly how.

(BOR. *kneels with one knee on back of round seat down* L., *uncovers his lantern, and places it on the top of the seat, so that its light strongly illuminates* DON J.'S *face and his own.*)

BOR. I think I told your lordship, a year since, how much I am in the favor of Margaret, the waiting gentlewoman to Hero.

DON J. I remember.

BOR. I can, at any unseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to look out at her lady's chamber window.

DON J. What life is in that, to be the death of this marriage?

BOR. The poison of that lies in you to temper. Go you to the prince your brother; spare not to tell him that he hath wronged his honour in marrying the renowned Claudio—whose estimation do you mightily hold up—to such a one as Hero.

READY lights out black.

DON J. What proof shall I make of that?

BOR. Proof enough to misuse the prince, to vex Claudio, to undo Hero, and kill Leonato. Find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and Count Claudio alone: tell them that you know that Hero loves me. They will scarcely believe this without trial: offer them instances; which shall bear no less likelihood than to see me at her chamber window; hear me call Margaret, Hero; and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding—for in the meantime I will so fashion the matter that Hero shall be absent,—and there shall appear such seeming truth of Hero's disloyalty, that jealousy shall be called assurance and all the preparation overthrown.

DON J. (*after a pause to consider*). Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice. Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

BOR. Be you constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

DON J. (*rising*). I will presently go learn their day of marriage.

(*As* DON J. *rises he appears to hear some one stirring in the garden, and makes a sign to* BOR., *who blows out the lantern. As lantern is blown out, all lights go black out.*)

LIGHTS out.

Exeunt DON J. *and* BOR. *up-stairs* L. I E.

MUSICAL INTERMEZZO

with light effects to denote the change from night to morning, between Act II and Act III.

The music is descriptive of night, the coming of dawn, daybreak, at last full day.

LIGHTS

After 45-60 seconds of black darkness, the pale rose dawn light begins to show faintly in the sky only, at first (transparent drop), then to be reflected in the sea. As light behind drop increases, work up ambers in back border very gradually till back drop is pretty bright before the other borders and foots come on. Then gradually work up all lights. When all borders and foots are about one-half up, bring up the arc lights (pale rose mediums) on dimmers gradually to full to full up, to represent the early morning sunlight; then change these to ambers. After all arcs are full up, bring up all foots and borders to full power gradually. All these light effects should harmonize with the character of the music.

ACT III

Scene 1.—LEONATO'S *garden. Morning.*

READY horn, R.

(*Laughter heard off* R.)

HORN off R.

Enter *gate, down* R., BEN., *followed by* BOY, MAN 1, MAN 2 *and* MAN 3. BEN. *is in hawking costume, gloved, and with a hooded falcon on his wrist. He enters followed by* BOY. *The* MEN *come just in sight behind gate, and then* **exit** R. BEN. *crosses* R. C., *and gives hawk and gloves to* BOY. BOY *crosses* L. *as if to exit up steps* L. U. E. BEN. *crosses to* L. C.

BEN. (*calling after* BOY). Boy!
BOY (*turning up* L.). Signior?

BEN. In my chamber-window lies a book: bring it hither to me. (*Indicates arbor* R. BOY *bows and* **exits** *up steps* L. U. E. BEN. *turns as if to go into arbor through up-stage entrance, sees* BEAT.'S *fan lying on low shrubs before arbor, picks it up, and after a moment's reflection.*) I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love: and such a man is Claudio. I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe: I have known when he would have walked ten mile a-foot to see a good armour; and now will he lie ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier; and now is he turned orthography; his words are a very fantastical banquet,—just so many strange dishes. (*Regarding fan again, and, after a pause.*) May *I* be so converted and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not. (*Pointedly lays fan back on shrubs by arbor.*) I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, *till* he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. (*Crosses* L. *to round seat down* L.) One woman is fair, yet I am well: another is wise, yet I am well; another virtuous, yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. (*Sits on round seat down* L.) Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair—shall be of what color it please Heaven. (*Hears* DON P. *approaching*, L. 1 E.) Ha! the prince and Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbor.

(*Crosses stealthily up* R., *goes into arbor through up-stage entrance, and sits on seat inside, concealed from audience.*)

Enter *down steps* L. 1 E., DON P. (1), CLAUD. (2), *and* LEON. (3). *They go up* L. *to below fountain and gaze craftily about for* BEN.

DON P. See you where Benedick hath hid himself?
CLAUD. O, very well, my lord.

Enter *down steps* L. U. E., BOY, *with book for* BEN., *stops at foot of steps to bow to the gentlemen, and then looks about for* BEN., *spies him in the arbor, and is about to go to him, when realizing his purpose,* CLAUD. *and* DON P. *rush at him and capture him* C. CLAUD. *leads him up* L. C. *by the ear, and by gestures they command him to* **exit**, *which he does, wonderingly,* L. U. E., *up steps. The conspirators look across to see if their move has been observed by* BEN.

DON P. (*coming down* C.). Come, shall we hear this music?
CLAUD. (*coming down* C.). Yea, my good lord.

(DON P. *motions off up* L. I E. *for* BALTH. *to approach.* LEON. *joins* DON P., C.)

Enter *down steps* L. I E., BALTH., *followed by* CHOIR BOYS, *with stringed instruments.* BALTH. *comes* L. C. *The* BOYS *stand grouped on the steps.*

DON P. (*coming to round seat down* L.). Come, Balthasar, we'll hear that song again.

READY music.

BALTH. O, good my lord, tax not so bad a voice
To slander music any more than once.
DON P. It is the witness still of excellency
To put a strange face on his own perfection.
I pray thee, sing, and let me woo no more.

(*Sits on* L. *of circular seat, facing from audience.*)

(LEON. *sits on* R. *of circular seat, facing left front, half turned from audience.* CLAUD. *stands* C., *facing* BALTH. BALTH. *makes a sign to* BOYS, *who begin to play the prelude.*)

BEN. (*as* BALTH. *enters,* BEN., *curious, rises and peers round down-stage entrance to arbor; and, as music begins*):

MUSIC.

Now, divine air! now is his soul ravished! Well, a horn for my money, when all's done.

(*Stands in arbor door during song, occasionally, during the chorus, beating time out of time.*)

THE SONG

BALTH. Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever,
One foot in sea and one on shore,
To one thing constant never:
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no more,
Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy:
Then sigh not so, etc.

DON P. (*rising*). By my troth, a good song.
BALTH. (*with a bow*). And an ill singer, my lord.
DON P. Ha, no, no, faith.

(CLAUD. *goes to* DON P. *and speaks to him.*)

BEN. (*in doorway of arbor*). An he had been a dog that should have howled thus, they would have hanged him.

(*Returns into arbor and reseats himself inside.*)

DON P. (*to* CLAUD.). Yea, marry. (*Turning to* BALTH.) Dost thou hear, Balthasar? I pray thee, get us some excellent music; for to-morrow night we should have it at the Lady Hero's chamber-window.

BALTH. The best I can, my lord.

DON P. (*crossing* C.). Do so: farewell. (BALTH. *makes sign to* CHOIR BOYS *who* exit *up steps* L. 1 E. *He follows them and* exits. *After glancing to see that* BEN. *is still in the arbor, and with a meaning sign to the others,* DON P. *goes* R. *and seats himself on down-stage end of bench by arbor.*) Come hither, Leonato. What was it you told me of to-day? that your niece Beatrice was in love with Signior Benedick?

(LEON. *crosses to* DON P.—*pausing for* CLAUD.'S *aside—and sits above him on bench* R.)

CLAUD. Oh, ay. (*Comes around from back of seat to intercept* LEON. *as he crosses, and aside to him.*) Stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits. (*Aloud, approaching the others* R. C.) I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

LEON. No, nor I neither; but most wonderful that she should so dote on Signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviours seemed ever to abhor.

BEN. (*rising slowly, his amazed face appearing at window in* L. *side of arbor. Aside*). Is 't possible? Sits the wind in that corner? (*Disappears.*)

LEON. By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it, but—she loves him with an enraged affection;—it is past the infinite of thought.

DON P. May be she doth but counterfeit.

CLAUD. Faith, like enough.

LEON. O Lord, counterfeit! There was never counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion as she discovers it.

DON P. Why, what effects of passion shows she?

CLAUD. (*aside to* LEON.). Bait the hook well; this fish will bite.

LEON. (*hesitating,—trying to invent but unable to do so*). What effects, my lord? She . . . will sit you, . . . (*To* CLAUD., *endeavoring to shift the burden on to him*) *you* heard my daughter tell you how.

CLAUD. (*turning away with a concealed laugh at* LEON.'S *plight*). She did, indeed.

DON P. (*urging* LEON. *on*). How, how, I pray you? (*Then seeing that* LEON. *is stuck.*) You amaze me. (*Rises and crosses* L. *to round bench down* L.) I would have thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

LEON. (*in great relief, following* DON P. *to* R. *of round bench down* L.; *crossing* CLAUD.). I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick.

BEN. (*as the others cross,* BEN. *has crept again to front entrance of arbor*). I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it: knavery cannot, sure, hide himself in such reverence.

(*During the following speeches,* BEN. *stands in down-stage arbor door, expressing his varying emotions by face and attitude, and occasionally dodging in out of sight.*)

CLAUD. (*crossing* L. *to back of round seat down* L. *and kneeling on it*). He hath ta'en the infection: hold it up.

DON P. (*sits*). Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

LEON. No; and swears she never will: that's her torment.

CLAUD. 'Tis true, indeed; so your daughter says.

LEON. (*sitting on* R. *side of bench*). My daughter says the ecstasy hath so much overborne her that she is sometime afeard she will do a desperate outrage to herself.

DON P. It were good that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it.

CLAUD. To what end? He would make but a sport of it, and torment the poor lady worse.

DON P. An he should, it were an alms deed to hang him. She's an excellent sweet lady.

CLAUD. And she is exceeding wise.

DON P. In everything but in loving Benedick. I would she had bestowed this dotage on me (*rises and goes* C. *and turns*): I pray you, tell Benedick of it, and hear what a' will say.

LEON. (*rising and going to* DON P., C.). Were it good, think you?

CLAUD. Hero thinks surely she will die; for she says she will die, if he love her not; and she will die, ere she make her love known; and she will die, if he woo her, rather than she will bate one breath of her accustomed crossness.

DON P. She doth well; if she should make tender of her love, 'tis very possible he'll scorn it; for the man, as you know all, hath a contemptible spirit. (BEN., *piqued, retires into arbor.* DON P., *reflectively coming down* C. *a little.*) Well, I am sorry for your niece. Shall we go seek Benedick, and tell him of her love?

CLAUD. (*standing up behind round seat,* L.). Never tell him, my lord: let her wear it out with good counsel.

LEON. Nay, that's impossible: she may wear her heart out first.

DON P. Well, we will hear further of it by your daughter: let it cool the while. I love Benedick well; and I could wish he would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady.

(CLAUD. *nearly bursts of suppressed laughter. The others frown at him in alarmed reproof. He goes* L. *of round seat—going in front of it—and stands facing away from them.*)

LEON. (*with a glance of reproof at* CLAUD., *as if afraid to trust him further, they start up* C. *together*). My lord, will you walk? Dinner is ready.

CLAUD. (*running round above them, and coming between them* C.; *aside*). If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expectation.

DON P. Let there be the same net spread for her; and that must your daughter and her gentlewomen carry. The sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of another's dotage, and no such matter: that's the scene that I would see. (*They all nearly explode with suppressed laughter, and taking pains to resume their outward gravity, they turn up* C. *as if to exit* L. U. E., DON P. *going ahead, and* LEON. *and* CLAUD. *following.* DON P. *as he reaches foot of steps* L. U. E. *is struck with a new idea; turning and intercepting the others.*) Let us send her to call him in to dinner.

(*They all nearly explode again with laughter, and restraining it—for it should not be so marked that* BEN., *behind them, could perceive their mirth—they* **exit** *up steps* L. U. E., *with arms about each other's necks.*)

BEN. (*coming out of arbor and sinking, amazed, on right end of bench by arbor*). This can be no trick: the conference was sadly borne. They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady: it seems her affections have their full bent. (*Rising and going down* C.) Love me! why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured: they say I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her; they say too that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry: I must not seem proud: happy are they that hear their detractions, and can put them to mending. (*Bethinks himself of* BEAT.'S *fan—on low shrubs* L. *of arbor—picks it up tenderly, and comes* C. *Throughout the speech he handles the fan in marked contrast to his previous light treatment of it.*) They say the lady is fair,—'tis a truth, I can bear them witness; and wise, but for loving me,—by my troth, it is no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her. (*Goes to round seat* L. C.; *sits and thinks.*) I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage: but doth not the appetite alter? a man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure

in his age. Shall quips and sentences and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humour? No (*rises*), the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. (*Crosses up* R., *in meditation, as if to exit* L. U. E., *but as he nears steps looks off and sees* BEAT. *approaching* L. U. E.) Here comes Beatrice. (*Hides fan hastily behind his back; then, looking off.*) By this day! she's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in her.

(*Backs down stage to bench by arbor,* R. C., *and sits, assuming an effectively pensive attitude.*)

Enter BEAT. *on platform,* L. U. E., *and stands looking down at* BEN. *for a moment with a mischievous smile before speaking.*

BEAT. Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

BEN. (*rising with an elaborately courtly bow*). Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

WARN curtain.

BEAT. (*coming down steps and advancing up* L. C.). I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me: if it had been painful, I would not have come.

BEN. (*going* C. *to her, and with insinuating tenderness of tone*). You take pleasure, then, in the message?

BEAT. Yea (*with a little look of wonder at his tone*), just so much as you may take upon a knife's point, and choke a daw withal. (*He turns away as if a little wounded.* BEAT., *still wondering at his evident change of manner, goes half-way up steps, turns, and then.*) You have no stomach, signior? (*He does not answer. She goes to top of steps and turns.*) Fare you well.

(*He turns. She drops him a deep, mocking courtesy and* **exits** L. U. E.)

BEN. (*up* C., *watches her off, and then turns and comes down* C., *and again regarding the fan*). Ha! . . . Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner; there's a double meaning in that. I took no more pains for those thanks than you took pains to thank me; that's as much as to say, "Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks." (*With*

vigorous resolution.) If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew! (*A moment's pause, and then with sudden inspiration.*) I will go get her picture.

(*Stands* C., *as if inspired by the idea.*)

CURTAIN

Scene 2.—LEONATO'S *Garden.—Afternoon.*

(*Arc lights change to opposite side of scene from previous scene.* MARG. *discovered seated on bench by arbor,* R. C., *embroidering at an Elizabethan tapestry frame.*)

Enter *on platform,* L. U. E., HERO *and* URS., *as if looking for* MARG. *As they see her,* HERO *runs down steps and crosses to her, rapidly.* URS. *follows, more slowly, and comes* C.)

(*Note: In this scene* HERO *carries a plumed fan, in the centre of which is set a small mirror. She should make the audience aware of the mirror—by using it to adjust her hair, or the like—during the opening speeches.*)

HERO (R. C.). Good Margaret, run thee to the parlor;
There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice
Proposing with the prince and Claudio:
Whisper her ear and tell her, I and Ursula
Walk in the garden, and our whole discourse
Is all of her; say that thou overheard'st us;
And bid her steal into the pleachéd bower,
To listen to our purpose.

(MARG. *gathers up her embroidery and goes toward* L. U. E.)

This is thy office;
Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone.

MARG. (*turning at bottom of steps* L. U. E.). I'll make her come, I warrant you, presently.

Exit, L. U. E.

HERO (*going to* URS., C., *and during the first lines bringing her down toward round seat,* L. C.).

Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
Our talk must only be of Benedick.
When I do name him, let it be thy part
To praise him more than ever man did merit:

(*They sit on round seat,* L. C.; HERO *on* R. *of* URS.)

My talk to thee must be, how Benedick
Is sick in love with Beatrice.

Enter BEAT., *stealthily—her face beaming with anticipation of mischief—down steps* L. U. E., *and steals across* R., *up-stage, and into arbor* R. *by its up-stage doorway, and stands in that doorway. As* BEAT. *enters,* HERO *sees her in the mirror in her fan and points her out to* URS.

Now begin;
For look where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs
Close by the ground, to hear our conference.

URS. Fear you not my part of the dialogue.

HERO. Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing
Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it.

(*Both rise and cross* R. *slowly, during* URS.'S *speech.* HERO *on* R. *of* URS.)

No truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful.

URS. But are you sure
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?

HERO. So says the prince and my new-trothèd lord.

URS. And did they bid you tell her of it, madam?

(*They stop below door of arbor* R. *and stand.* BEAT. *shrinks back behind up-stage entrance to arbor.*)

HERO. They did entreat me to acquaint her of it;
But I persuaded them, if they loved Benedick,
To wish him wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

(BEAT., *amazed, and as if to hear better, creeps out from behind arbor to up* L. C.)

URS. Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full —

HERO (*interrupting: going to gate* R. I E. *and standing.* URS. *moves to entrance of arbor.* BEAT. *comes down a little*).

I know he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man:
But nature never framed a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice;
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprising what they look on; and her wit
Values itself so highly, that to her
All matter else seems weak:

(*Crosses* URS. L., *to bench by arbor* L., *and sits on* L. *end of bench.*)

she cannot love

(BEAT. *shrinks up* C.)

She is so self-endeared.

URS. Sure, I think so;
And therefore certainly it were not good
She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.

(*Walks* R. *to gate* R. I E., *and then returns to before entrance to arbor, during* HERO'S *speech.*)

HERO. Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured,
But she would spell him backward: if fair-faced,
She would swear the gentleman should be her sister;
If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds;
If silent, why, a block moved with none.
So turns she every man the wrong side out.

URS. Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

HERO. But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,
She would mock me into air; O, she would laugh me
Out of myself, press me to death with wit!
Therefore let Benedick, like cover'd fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly:
It were a better death than die with mocks,
Which is as bad as die with tickling.

URS. (*going to bench by arbor and sitting* R. *of* HERO).
Yet tell her of it: hear what she will say.

HERO (*rising and going* C.).
No; rather I will go to Benedick,

(*As* HERO *rises*, BEAT. *creeps back behind arbor.*)

And counsel him to fight against his passion.

(*Turning* C.)

And, truly, I'll devise some honest slanders
To stain my cousin with: one doth not know
How much an ill word may empoison liking.

URS. O, do not do your cousin such a wrong!
She cannot be so much without true judgment,—
Having so swift and excellent a wit
As she is prized to have,—as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as Signior Benedick.

HERO. He is the only man of Italy,—
Always excepted my dear Claudio.

URS. (*rising and joining* HERO, C.). When are you married, madam?

HERO. Why, every day,—to-morrow.

(*Crossing slowly with* URS. *toward steps* L. 1 E., *and meantime watching for* BEAT. *in her fan.*)

Come, go in:
I'll show thee some attires; and have thy counsel
Which is the best to furnish me to-morrow.

(*Sees* BEAT. *in her fan as they reach* L. 1 E., *and calls* URS.'S *attention. As they cross*, BEAT. *follows them over, upstage, and as they turn before exit, she hides behind fountain* L. C.)

URS. She's limed, I warrant you: we have caught her, madam.

HERO. If it prove so, then loving goes by haps:
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.

Exeunt HERO *and* URS., *up steps* L. 1 E.

BEAT. (*crossing slowly down* C. *and pausing* C.). What fire is in mine ears?
Can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!
No glory lives behind the back of such.

(*Stretching out her arms toward house* L.)

And Benedick, love on; I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand:
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band;
For others say thou dost deserve, and I —

(*With a flash of her old humor at herself.*)

Believe it better than reportingly.

(*Hears* DON P. *and others approaching* L. 1 E., *and, ashamed to be caught in her present mood, runs into arbor, and* **exits** *through arbor* R.)

Enter CLAUD., R., *and* DON P., L., *down steps* L. 1 E. DON P. *has his arm thrown affectionately across* CLAUD.'S *shoulder, and as they speak they cross slowly to bench* R. *by arbor.*

DON P. I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then I go toward Arragon.

CLAUD. I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe me.

DON P. (*laughing*). Nay, that would be as great a soil in the new gloss of your marriage, as to show a child his new coat and forbid him to wear it. (*As they reach bench by arbor* R., *they sit,* CLAUD. *on down-stage end, and* DON P. *above him.* **Enter** *down steps* L. 1 E., LEON., R. *and* BEN., L. BEN. *stands pensively by round bench down* L.; LEON. *goes to up* C. DON P. *pointedly.*) I will only be bold with Benedick for his company; for, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth: he hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bow-string, and the little hangman dare not shoot at him; he hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper, for what his heart thinks his tongue speaks.

BEN. (*standing by round seat down* L.). Gallants, I am not as I have been.

LEON. (*up* C.). So say I: methinks you are sadder.

CLAUD. I hope he be in love.

(BEN. *sits on round seat, down* L., *and faces away from them.*)

DON P. Hang him, truant! there's no true drop of blood in him to be truly touched with love; if he be sad, he wants money.

BEN. I have the toothache.

DON P. What! sigh for the toothache?

LEON. Which is but a humour or a worm.

BEN. (*rising petulantly*). Well, every one can master a grief but he that has it.

(*Goes up to fountain* L., *leans over it, and produces handkerchief which he holds to his cheek.*)

CLAUD. (*rising*). Yet say I, he is in love.

DON P. (*crossing to* L. *of* LEON., C.). There is no appearance of fancy in him, unless it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises; as (*indicating* BEN.'S *fashionable garb, and walking around to* L. *of* BEN. *as if admiring him*), to be a Dutchman to-day, a Frenchman to-morrow.

CLAUD. (*crossing to behind* BEN.). If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing old songs (*rising on tiptoe to observe* BEN.'S *hat*): a' brushes his hat o' mornings: what should that bode?

DON P. (L. *and below* BEN., *stooping down to look up at* BEN.'S *face*). Hath any man seen him at the barber's?

(BEN. *turns his face sharply up stage.*)

CLAUD. (*going up to above* BEN. *and looking at his face*). No, but the barber's man hath been seen with him; and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuffed tennis-balls.

(BEN. *puts handkerchief again to his face.*)

LEON. Indeed, he looks younger than he did, by the loss of a beard.

DON P. (*snatching* BEN.'S *handkerchief from him, and smelling it*). Nay, a' rubs himself with civet: can you smell him out by that?

(BEN. *turns to snatch handkerchief, and* DON P. *tosses it over* BEN.'S *head to* CLAUD.)

CLAUD. (*smelling handkerchief*). That's as much as to say, the sweet youth's in love.

(BEN. *goes to* L. *of* CLAUD. *to get handkerchief.* CLAUD. *tosses it to* LEON.)

DON P. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

(BEN. *crosses* CLAUD. *to* LEON., *who, laughingly, hands him the handkerchief.*)

CLAUD. Nay, but I know who loves him.

DON P. That would I know too: I warrant, one that knows him not.

CLAUD. Yes, and, in despite of all, dies for him.

BEN. (*turning upon them sharply*). Yet is this no charm for the toothache. (*To* LEON.) Old Signior, walk aside with me: I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which these hobby-horses must not hear.

(*Takes* LEON. *by the arm and leads him up* L., *with an indignant glance back at the others.*)

Exeunt BEN. *and* LEON. *up steps* L. U. E.

DON P. (*as they disappear, clapping his hands in mirth and going* C., *crossing* CLAUD.). For my life, to break with him about Beatrice.

CLAUD. (*following him to* C.). 'Tis even so. Hero and Margaret have by this played their parts with Beatrice; and then the two bears will not bite one another when they meet.

Enter DON J., *through gate* R. I E.

DON J. (*coming* R. C.). My lord and brother, Heaven save you!

DON P. (C.). Good den, brother.

DON J. If your leisure served, I would speak with you.

DON P. In private?

DON J. If it please you (CLAUD. *starts* L., *as if to exit* L. I E.; DON J. *stops him with*): yet Count Claudio may hear; for what I would speak of concerns him.

CLAUD. (*turning* L. C.). What's the matter?

DON J. (*to* CLAUD.). Means your lordship to be married to-morrow?

DON P. You know he does.

DON J. I know not that, when he knows what I know.

CLAUD. (*wonderingly, and with a shade of indignation in his voice*). If there be any impediment, I pray you discover it.

DON J. You may think I love you not: let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest. For my brother, I think he holds you well, and in dearness of

heart hath holp to effect your ensuing marriage—surely suit ill spent and labour ill bestowed.

DON P. Why, what's the matter?

DON J. I came hither to tell you. (*Comes* C. *to* R. *of* DON P. CLAUD. *comes* C. *to* L. *of* DON P.) Circumstances shortened—for she hath been too long a talking of—the lady is disloyal.

CLAUD. Who, Hero?

(*His hand, with an impetuous gesture, to his sword.*)

(DON P. *lays his hand on* CLAUD.'S *arm to quiet him.*)

DON J. Even she; Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero.

CLAUD. (*stunned—not understanding*). Disloyal?

DON J. The word is too good to paint out her wickedness; I could say she were worse: think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. (CLAUD. *shrinks back from* DON P. *a few steps* L. DON P. *follows and again lays a restraining hand on his arm.*) Wonder not till further warrant: go but with me to-night, you shall see her chamber-window entered, even the night before her wedding day: if you love her then, to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

WARN curtain.

CLAUD. (L. C., *stunned*). May this be so?

DON P. (L. C.). I will not think it.

DON J. (C.). If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know: if you will follow me, I will show you enough; and when you have seen more, and heard more, proceed accordingly.

CLAUD. (*aflame with sudden boyish suspicion, withdrawing his arm from* DON P.). If I see anything to-night why I should not marry her—to-morrow, in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

DON P. (*putting his arm about* CLAUD.'S *shoulders*). And, as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her.

DON J. I will disparage her no farther till you are my witnesses (*goes up* C. *and turns*): bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself.

Exit *up steps* L. U. E., *looking back.*

(*For a moment* DON P. *and* CLAUD. *stand transfixed in motionless horror. Then* CLAUD. *abruptly breaks from* DON P.'S *arm and takes a step* L. DON P. *holds out both arms to him in compassion. Suddenly, and with a sob,* CLAUD. *turns to him and buries his face on* DON P.'S *shoulder.*)

SLOW CURTAIN

Scene 3.—*A Street.—Midnight or, exactly, 1 A. M.*

Enter, *carrying lantern and large bell,* VERGES *from* R. U. E. *As he reaches* C. *under arch, he turns and beckons off* R. *to the watch.* **Enter,** R. U. E., SEACOLE, OATCAKE, MAN 1, MAN 3, SERVANT 4 *and* SENESCHAL, *all with bills.* VERGES *directs them to stand down* L. C. *They group there in awkward embarrassment,* SEA. *and* OAT. *down-stage in front.* VERG. *crosses* R. *and knocks at house door* R. *and returns* C.

Enter DOGBERRY *from house* R., *leaving door open behind him. Through house door, orange arc light streams out and casts a beam across stage.*

DOG. (*standing in doorway,* R.). Are you good men and true?

VERG. (C.). Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

DOG. Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the prince's watch.

VERG. Well, give them their charge, neighbor Dogberry.

DOG. (*coming* R. C.). First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable?

VERG. Hugh Oatcake, or George Seacole; for they can write and read.

DOG. Come hither, neighbor Seacole. (SEA. *stands forward a little awkwardly.*) Heaven hath blessed you with a good name: to be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune; but to write and read comes by nature. You are thought here

to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore bear you the lantern. (*Motions to* VERG., *who gives* SEA. *the lantern and bell.*) This is your charge: you shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name.

(OAT. *comes to* SEA. *and whispers to him.*)

SEA. (*stupidly, as if prompted*). How if a' will not stand?

DOG. Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.

VERG. (*eagerly thrusting himself into the conversation, coming between* DOG. *and* SEA.). If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the prince's subjects.

DOG. True, and they are to meddle with none but the prince's subjects. You shall also make no noise in the streets; for the watch to babble and to talk is most tolerable and not to be endured.

OAT. We will rather sleep than talk: we know what belongs to a watch.

DOG. Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman; for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: only, have a care that your bills be not stolen. Well, you are to call at all the ale-houses, and bid those that are drunk get them to bed.

(OAT. *again whispers to* SEA.)

SEA. (*prompted by* OAT.). How if they will not?

DOG. Why, then, let them alone till they are sober: if they make you not then the better answer, you may say they are not the men you took them for. If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man; and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty. (*Starts* R., *as if to exit.*)

OAT. If we knew him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

DOG. (*turning*). Truly, by your office, you may; but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled: (*coming toward them*) the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company.

(*Turns again, as if to exit* R.)

VERG. (*coming forward*). You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

DOG. Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath any honesty in him.

(*Again turning away.*)

VERG. (*eagerly seizing his opportunity, to the watch*). If you hear a child crying in the night, you must call to the nurse and bid her still it.

(DOG. *turns at door, anticipating* VERG.'S *difficulty.* OAT. *nudges* SEA.)

SEA. (*nudged by* OAT.). How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us?

(VERG. *is unable to think of an answer.*)

DOG. (*coming* R. C., *elbowing* VERG. *aside*). Why, then, depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying; for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes will never answer a (*indicating* SEA.) calf when he bleats.

(*Turns* R. *toward door. The* WATCHMEN, *amused at the retort, grin sheepishly.*)

VERG. (*again interfering*). 'Tis very true ——

(DOG. *interrupts him.*)

DOG. (*again turning* C., *interrupting* VERG.). This is the end of the charge: you, constable, are to present the prince's own person. If you meet the prince in the night, you may stay him.

VERG. (*eagerly*). Nay, by 'r lady, that I think a' cannot.

DOG. Five shillings to one on 't, with any man that knows the statues, he may stay him:—marry, not without the prince be willing; for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man; and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

(*During this speech, the* SENESCHAL *quietly leans his bill against wall* L.—*not attracting attention to the action—and leaves it behind when he exits.*)

VERG. (*wilted*). By 'r lady, I think it be so.

DOG. A, ha! Well, masters, good-night: (*goes to door* R.

and turns) an there be any matter of weight chances, call up me: keep your fellows' counsels and your own; and good-night. (*Motions to* VERG.) Come, neighbor.

Exit *into house* R., *followed by* VERG. *They close the door.*

SEA. (*puzzled what to do next*). Well, masters, we hear our charge . . . (*with sudden inspiration*) let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to bed.

(*They start to exit up through arch* C. *As they get under arch,* DOG. *opens door and stands in doorway.* VERG. *stands behind, peering over his shoulder. The* WATCH *halts up* C.)

DOG. (*standing in doorway*). One word more, honest neighbors. I pray you, watch about Signior Leonato's door; for the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to-night. Adieu . . . be vigitant . . . I beseech you.

Exit *into house, closing the door.* **Exit** *through arch* C. *and off* L. U. E., SEA., *ringing bell—the sound of which gradually dies away in the distance—followed by* OAT., MAN 1, MAN 3, SERVANT 4 *and* SENESCHAL. *As sound of bell dies away,* **enter** BOR. *from* R. U. E. *through centre arch. Looks off* L. *after* WATCH, *then comes* C., *as if to spy some shelter, sees pent-house.*

BOR. (C., *calling in whisper*). What Conrade! (*Pauses and listens.*) Conrade, I say!

Enter CON. *through arch from* R., *and going to* L. *of* BOR.

CON. Here, man;—I am at thy elbow.

BOR. Stand thee close, under this pent-house, for it drizzles rain; and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

(*They go* R. *and stand huddled under roof over door* R., CON. *down-stage,* BOR. *up-stage.*)

CON. And now forward with thy tale.

BOR. I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats.

Enter *from* L. U. E, *to up* C., OAT., *as if in search of bill, which was left against wall* L. *As he sees the conspirators, he starts, dismayed, aud does not dare go down. At the word "villains" in* BOR.'S *speech he starts again and*

exits, *stealing off* L. U. E., *as if to warn the others. He must be out of sight before* BOR. *says "Didst thou not hear somebody?"*

CON. Is it possible that any villainy should be so dear?

BOR. Thou shouldst rather ask, if it were possible any villainy should be so rich; for when rich villains have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will. (*Pausing suddenly to listen.*) Didst thou not hear somebody?

CON. (*coming out* C., *looking about, and then up at roof of house*). No; 'twas the vane on the house.

(*Holds up his hand to see whether it still rains.*)

BOR. Not so, neither; (*sees* CON.'S *gesture, and holds up his own hand to feel whether it still rains, finding it does not, comes* C. *on* R. *of* CON.) well, know that I have to-night wooed Margaret, the Lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero. She leans me out at her mistress' chamber-window, bids me a thousand times good-night,—I tell this tale vilely:—I should first tell thee how the prince, Claudio and my master, planted by my master Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter ——

CON. (*contemptuously*). And thought thy Margaret was Hero?

Enter *from* L. U. E., *stealthily, in arch,* SEA., *with bell,* OAT., SENESCHAL, MAN 1, MAN 3 *and* SERVANT 4. *They steal on slowly and group in the arch,* SEA. *on* R. *of arch,* OAT. *on* L. *of arch, the other in the middle. This entrance, which takes place during* BOR.'S *speech, should be made as quietly as possible, that attention may not be distracted from the lines.*

BOR. Two of them did, the prince and Claudio; but the devil my master knew she was Margaret; and partly by his oaths, which first possessed them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villainy, which did confirm any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio enraged; swore he would meet her, as he was appointed, to-morrow morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw o'er night, and send her home again without a husband.

WARN curtain.

SEA. (*running down* R. C., *ringing his bell violently*). We charge you, in the prince's name, stand!

(OAT. *runs down on* L. *of* CON. *and grasps him.* SENESCHAL *runs down on* R. *of* BOR. *and seizes him.* MAN 1 *and* MAN 3 *and* SERVANT 4 *come down behind* BOR. *and* CON., *and seize them from behind. They struggle and whole group works* L.)

OAT. (*struggling with* CON.). Call up the right master constable. (SEA. *runs to door* R. *and knocks violently and then comes* C., *ringing his bell.*) We have here the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth.

SEA. (*again running to door* R. *and knocking*). Never speak: (*comes* C.) we charge you let us obey you to go with us.

Enter, *amazed, in doorway* R., DOG., *in night cap, and with a pot of ale in his hand.* VERG., *also with a pot of ale, seen peering over his shoulder.* PICTURE.

CURTAIN

ACT IV

READY music.

Scene 1.—*A Church.—Morning.*

MUSIC.

(*Curtain rises on empty stage. Ten seconds after rise, choir heard singing off, very distant at first, and slowly growing louder till entrance of choir. As first faint singing is heard,* **enter** *from* R. 2 E., *behind altar,* BOY *with lighted taper. Comes* C., *makes genuflection before altar, opens gate in altar rail and goes up onto altar to light candles; lights candles visible to audience, and then goes into altar as if to light candles behind and* **exit.** *He does not reënter.*

LIGHTS.—*As* BOY *begins to light altar, bring up on dimmers, very gradually, two spot lights (one rose pink, the other amber) both of which are set above and behind altar and trained to throw a beam down the steps of the altar, and two-thirds across the stage. (N. B. This light is supposed to represent the candle light from altar and should not be brought up to full power until entrance of* FRIAR.) *At the same time bring up on dimmer from fly-gallery* L., *amber spot light, trained to cover the same area as the altar spots. (The object of the* L. *light is to soften the shadows from altar lights; and it should blend with them and not show as separate light.)*

(*As* BOY *goes up on altar,* **enter** *from* R. 2 E., *behind altar,* SERVANT 4, *dressed as a* VERGER; *crosses* L. *to gates* L. *in cut drop, opens them and stands outside, waiting for procession.*)

Enter *from* R. U. E., *behind cut drop; crossing* L., *and entering scene through gates* L.

PROCESSION

(1) CHOIR (*six boys and four monks, in pairs*). *The first two boys are swinging censers with incense. All the other boys and the choir men carry tall lighted church candles.*
(2) SENESCHAL, *dressed as cross-bearer with tall gilded cross.*
(3) FRIAR.

SPACE

(4) HERO R. *and* CLAUD. L. (CLAUD. *holds* HERO *by her* L. *hand.*)

SPACE

(5) BEAT.
(6) ANT. R. *and* LEON. L.
(7) URS. R. *and* MARG. L.

SPACE

(8) DON P. R. *and* DON J. L.
(9) BEN.

SPACE

(10) GIRL A R. *and* MAN 1 L. (SEXTON.)
(11) GIRL B R. *and* MAN 2 L. (OAT.)
(12) GIRL C R. *and* MAN 3 L.

CHOIR *turns up* C. *toward altar, and as they come to about* R. C. *each pair makes a genuflection before altar, turns and exit* R. 2 E., *behind altar.*

CROSS-BEARER *makes genuflection and follows* CHOIR *off* R. 2 E.

FRIAR *makes genuflection and goes up on to altar and kneels before desk.*

CLAUD. *leads* HERO *to altar, where she kneels on steps; he makes genuflection and stands just before steps.*

BEAT. *goes to foot of steps above* HERO.

ANT. *goes above and* L. *of* BEAT. (*standing out of light*).

LEON. *goes* L. *of* BEAT. *and a little below her.*

URS. *and* MARG. *go up* C. *and stand just out of light.*

DON P. *goes* C., *and stands in light, in front of* MARG.

DON J. *turns* L. *and stands beyond light* L., *opposite altar.*

BEN. *goes left of* DON P. *and a little above him, just out of light.*

GIRL A *and* MAN 1 *go up* L. *of gate and behind* DON J., *out of light.*

GIRL B *and* MAN 2 *go up* C., *behind* URS. *and* MARG.

GIRL C *and* MAN 3 *go up* L., *behind* GIRL A *and* MAN 1.

SERVANT 4 (VERGER) *stands in gateway* L., *closing gate behind him.*

(*See positions on scene plan.*)

(*As* CHOIR *exits, singing dim. to pp. and then dies away; but organ continues pp. till* CLAUD.'S *line "Stand thee by, Friar," and then ceases abruptly.*)

MUSIC.

(*As singing ceases, the* FRIAR *rises, comes to edge of platform, takes* HERO'S *right hand and raises her from her knees.*)

FRIAR (*holding* HERO'S *hand*). Lady, you come hither to be married to this count?

HERO. I do.

FRIAR. If either of you know any inward impediment why you should not be conjoined, I charge you, on your souls, to utter it.

CLAUD. Know you any, Hero?

HERO. None, my lord.

FRIAR. Know you any, count?

LEON. I dare make his answer, none.

CLAUD. O, what men dare do! what men may do!
What men daily do, not knowing what they do!

(*Slight start of surprise from guests.*)

STOP music.

Stand thee by, Friar (CLAUD. *takes* HERO'S *left hand in his right—the* FRIAR *releases her right hand—and turns to* LEON., *who comes forward a step*), Father, by your leave:
Will you, with free and inconstrainéd soul,
Give me this maid, your daughter?

LEON. As freely, son, as Heaven did give her me.

CLAUD. And what have I to give you back, whose worth
May counterpoise this rich and precious gift?

DON P. Nothing, unless you render her again.

CLAUD. Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankfulness.
There, Leonato, take her back again.

(*Drawing* HERO *a step left toward* LEON., *puts her across to* LEON; *goes to* R. *of* LEON. *and turns.* LEON. *moves close to* HERO, *who clings to him as soon as she realizes the purport of* CLAUD.'S *speech.*)

She's but the sign and semblance of her honour.
Behold how like a maid she blushes here!
Would you not swear,
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows? But she is none:
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

LEON. (*stunned*). What do you mean, my lord?

CLAUD. Not to be married,
Not to knit my soul to an approvèd wanton.

LEON. (*with sudden wrathful suspicion*). Dear my lord, if you ——

CLAUD. (*interrupting him with a gesture*).
I know what you would say;
No, Leonato,
I never tempted her with word too large;
But, as a brother to his sister, show'd
Bashful sincerity and comely love.
HERO. And seem'd I ever otherwise to you?
CLAUD. Out on thy seeming!
You seem to me as Dian in her orb,
As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown;
But you are more intemperate in your blood
Than Venus!
HERO (*stunned*). Is my lord well, that he doth speak so wide?
CLAUD. (*turning to* DON P.). Sweet prince, why speak not you?
DON P. (*coming forward and putting his arm over* CLAUD.'S *shoulder*). What should I speak?
I stand dishonour'd, that have gone about
To link my dear friend to a wanton here.
LEON. Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?
DON J. Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.
HERO (*turning and throwing herself into the arms of* BEAT., *who has meantime come down between* HERO *and the altar*). "True!" O God!
CLAUD. Leonato, stand I here?
Is this the prince? Is this the prince's brother?
Is this face Hero's? Are our eyes our own?
Let me but move one question to your daughter;
And, by that fatherly and kindly power
That you have in her, bid her answer truly.
LEON. I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.
HERO. O, Heaven defend me! how am I beset!
What kind of catechising call you this?
CLAUD. To make you answer truly to your name.
HERO (*turning with a proud flush*).
Is it not Hero? Who can blot that name
With any just reproach?
CLAUD. Marry, that can Hero:
Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue.
What man was he talk'd with you yesternight
Out at your window betwixt twelve and one?
HERO. I talk'd with no man at that hour, my lord.

(*During above* BEN. *has advanced just into light,* L. C. *At the mention of* DON J. *in* DON P.'S *speech he flashes a sudden keen glance of suspicion at* DON J., *and then quietly steps back out of light.*)

DON P. (*advancing a little*). Leonato,
I am sorry you must hear: upon mine honour,
Myself, my brother, and this grievèd count
Did see her, hear her, and at that hour last night
Talk with a ruffian at her chamber-window;
Who hath indeed, most like a liberal villain,
Confess'd the vile encounters they have had
A thousand times in secret.

(*Draws* CLAUD. *a little* L., *as if to take him away. With a little shuddering cry of horror* HERO *again shrinks to* BEAT. *and buries her face in* BEAT.'S *breast.*)

CLAUD. (*turning* C. *and stretching out his arms to* HERO).
O Hero, what a Hero hadst thou been,
If half thy outward graces had been placed
About thy thoughts, and counsels of thy heart!
(*Moving a step* L.) Farewell!
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love,
And on my eyelids shall conjecture hang,
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm.

(HERO *sinks down swooning.* BEAT., *kneeling at centre of altar steps, supports* HERO.'S *head in her lap.* DON P. *puts arm again about* CLAUD., *as if to comfort him and draw him away.*)

BEAT. Why, how now, cousin! wherefore sink you down?
DON J. Come, let us go.

(*He leads the way, followed by* DON P. *and* CLAUD., *to the gate, up* L., *which the* VERGER *opens. As* DON J. *reaches it he turns and lets* DON P. *and* CLAUD., *who have followed him, go first. He follows them, with a swift glance back. They* exit *through gate and off to* L.)

(*As they exit* BEN. *turns up-stage and makes a beseeching gesture to the onlookers to go, and they* exit *through gate* L. *and off* L. VERGER, GIRL C, MAN 3, MAN 2, GIRL B, GIRL A, MAN 1, MARG. *and* URS. *This* exit *should be*

made very quickly and quietly, and with awestruck looks. BEN. *follows them up to gate. Closes gate behind them, and returns* C. ANT. *comes down on* L. *of* LEON., *and attempts to comfort him.*)

BEN. (C). How doth the lady?
BEAT. Dead, I think. Help, uncle!
Hero! why, Hero! Uncle! Signior Benedick!
Friar!
LEON. Hath no man's dagger here a point for me?

(HERO *revives a little.*)

BEAT. How now, cousin Hero?
FRIAR (*who has come down on altar steps, bending over* HERO).
Have comfort, lady.

(HERO *raises herself a little and looks about wonderingly.*)

LEON. Dost thou look up?
FRIAR. Yes, wherefore should she not?
LEON. Wherefore! Why, doth not every earthly thing
Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny
The story that is printed in her blood?
Do not live, Hero; do not ope thine eyes:
For, did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,
Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches,
Strike at thy life. Grieved I, I had but one eye?
Chid I for that at frugal nature's frame?
Why had I one?
Ah, mine, and mine I loved, and mine I praised,
And mine that I was proud on!
O, she is fallen
Into a pit of ink, that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her clean again! (*Crosses* L.)
BEN. (*as* LEON. *crosses*). Sir, sir, be patient.
BEAT. O, on my soul, my cousin is belied!
BEN. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?
BEAT. No, truly not; although, until last night,
I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow.
LEON. Confirm'd, confirm'd! O, that is stronger made
Which was before barr'd up with ribs of iron!
Would the two princes lie, and Claudio lie,

Who loved her so, that, speaking of her foulness,
Wash'd it with tears? (*Attempting to start away* L.)
Hence from her! (BEN. *restrains him.*)
let her die!

FRIAR (*on altar*).
Hear me a little;
For I have only silent been so long,
By noting of the lady: I have mark'd
A thousand blushing apparitions
To start into her face; a thousand innocent shames
In angel whiteness beat away those blushes;
And in her eye there hath appeared a fire,
To burn the errors that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth.
Trust not my age,
My reverend calling, nor divinity,
If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here
Under some blighting error.

LEON. Friar, it cannot be. She denies it not:
Why seek'st *thou* then, to cover with excuse
That which appears in proper nakedness?

FRIAR (*raising her*).
Lady, what man is he you are accused of?

(HERO *gets to her feet, the* FRIAR *assisting, and* BEAT. *supporting her.*)

HERO (*wearily*). They know that do accuse me. I know none:
(*To* LEON.) O my father,
Prove you that any man with me conversed
At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight
Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,—
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death!

(*Turns sobbing and again hides her face on* BEAT.'S *breast.*)

FRIAR. There is some strange misprision in the princes.

BEN. Two of them have the very bent of honour;
And if their wisdom be misled in this,
The practise of it lies in John the bastard.

LEON. I know not. If they speak but truth of her,
These hands shall tear her; (*crosses* BEN. *to* C. ANT. *comes to* R. *of* LEON.) if they wrong her honour,

The proudest of them shall well hear of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,
Nor age so eat up my invention,
Nor fortune made such havoc of my means,
But they shall find, awaked in such a cause,
Both strength of limb and policy of mind,
To quit me of them thoroughly.

FRIAR (*coming to* LEON., C.). Pause awhile,
And let my counsel sway you in this case.
Your daughter here the princes left for dead:
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it that she is dead indeed.

LEON. What shall become of this? what will this do?

FRIAR. Marry, this, well carried, shall on her behalf
Change slander to remorse; that is some good:
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd
Upon the instant that she was accused,
Shall be lamented, pitied, and excused
Of every hearer.
So will it fare with Claudio:
When he shall hear she died upon his words,
The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
Into his study of imagination;
And every lovely organ of her life
Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit,
More moving-delicate and full of life,
Into the eye and prospect of his soul,
Than when she lived indeed; then shall he mourn,
And wish he had not so accused her,
No, though he thought his accusation true.

(*Goes to* HERO, *who turns to him and shrinks into his arms as if for protection. He leads her a little* C. BEAT. *sinks down on steps of altar, her head resting on her right hand, her left hand hanging by her side.*)

BEN. Signior Leonato, let the Friar advise you:
And though you know my inwardness and love
Is very much unto the prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honour, I will deal in this
As secretly and justly as your soul
Should with your body.

LEON. Being that I flow in grief,
The smallest twine may lead me.

(ANT. *turns him up* C. *as if to take him off up* R.)

FRIAR. 'Tis well consented: presently away;
Come lady, die to live: (*turns* HERO *up toward* R. 2 E., *and speaking as they go*) this wedding day
Perhaps is but prolong'd: have patience and endure.

Exit HERO *and* FRIAR *through* R. 2 E., *above altar and off* R., *closely followed by* ANT. *supporting* LEON.

(*After a moment's pause*, BEN., C., *looks for a moment at the weeping* BEAT. *with infinite compassion and then goes to her, and kneeling beside her takes left hand tenderly. She does not withdraw it.*)

BEN. (*after a moment*). Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?

BEAT. (*still kneeling and with averted face*). Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

BEN. (*rising, but retaining her hand*). I will not desire that.

BEAT. (*rising and crossing him* L., *to* C., *as if to conceal her tears*). You have no reason; I do it freely.

BEN. (*following her a little toward* C.). Surely I do believe your fair cousin is wronged.

BEAT. (*turning toward him quickly, with a flash of gratitude, and slowly, but without too much personal meaning*). Ah, how much might the man deserve of me that would right her! (*Crosses him* R. *to altar.*)

BEN. Is there any way to show such friendship?

BEAT. (*her back turned to him, standing before altar; slowly*). A very even way, but no such friend.

BEN. May a man do it?

BEAT. (*still turned from him*). It *is* a man's office, but not yours.

(*A moment's silence.*)

BEN. (*he goes to her and takes her left hand, and then*). I do love nothing in the world so well as you: is not that strange?

BEAT. As strange as—the thing I know not. (*Half confessing.*) It were as possible for me to say I loved nothing so well as you: (*half withdrawing*) but believe me not; and yet (*again yielding*) I lie not;—(*withdrawing her hand*) I confess

nothing, nor I deny nothing. (*Kneels down at altar rail, and hides face in her hands.*) I am sorry for my cousin.

BEN. (*slowly, with a ring of triumph in his voice*). By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me.

BEAT. (*still turned away and kneeling*). Do not swear by it, and eat it.

BEN. I will swear by it that you love me; and I will make him eat it that says I love not you.

BEAT. (*rising, but still with averted face,—tremulously*). Will you not eat your word?

BEN. With no sauce that can be devised to it. I protest I love thee.

BEAT. (*half turning toward him*). Why, then (*turning away again, in a half aside*), Heaven forgive me ——

BEN. What offence, sweet Beatrice?

BEAT. (*her face averted*). You have stayed me in a happy hour: I was—about to—protest—I loved you.

BEN. (*seizes her hand again*). And do it with all thy heart.

BEAT. I love you with so much of my heart, that (*going to him*) none is left to protest.

BEN. (*he clasps her in his arms, and then, after a moment's silence, passionately, but slowly and quietly*). Come, bid me do anything for thee.

BEAT. (*she raises her head from his breast and draws her hands down his arms till she has him at arm's length, and then, gazing unflinchingly into his eyes says quietly, but with an intense depth of emotional feeling*). Kill Claudio.

BEN. (*stands for a moment stupefied, as if not comprehending her words, and then, drawing back a step or two, and in an awed whisper*). Ha! not for the wide world.

BEAT. (*with a little choked cry*). You kill me to deny it. (*Turns from him and starts as if to exit* R. U. E.) Farewell.

BEN. (*pursuing her and catching her—behind her*). Tarry, sweet Beatrice.

BEAT. (*with great pathos, gazing into his eyes*). I am gone, though I am here; (*starts down* C. *away from him*) there is no love in you: (*he follows, not releasing her, and she says in a voice choked with tears*) nay, I *pray* you, let me go.

(*He releases her and she goes down* L. C.)

BEN. (*coming* C. *toward her, with outstretched arms*). Beatrice ——

BEAT. (*turning toward him, down* L. C.). In faith, I will go.

BEN. We'll be friends first.

BEAT. (*with a little flash of pride*). You dare easier be friends with me than fight with mine enemy.

BEN. Is Claudio thine enemy?

BEAT. (*drawing herself up*). Is he not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman? O that I were a man! (*Crosses him* R. *to* R. C. *and turns. He counters to* L. C.) What, bear her in hand until they come to take hands; and then, with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour,—O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place.

(*Goes* R. *to steps.*)

BEN. (*coming* C.). Hear me, Beatrice.

BEAT. (*turning*). Talk with a man out at a window! A proper saying!

BEN. (*coming toward her* R. C., *beseechingly*). Nay, but, Beatrice ——

BEAT. (*crossing him* L. *to* L. C.). Sweet Hero! She is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone.

BEN. Beat ——

BEAT. (*turning* L. C.). Princes and counties! Surely, a princely testimony, a goodly count! O that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into courtesies, valour into compliment (*crosses him* R. *to altar*), he is now as valiant as Hercules that only tells a lie, and swears it. I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore (*sinking down on steps of altar*), I will die a woman with grieving.

BEN. Tarry, good Beatrice. By this hand, I love thee.

BEAT. (*on altar steps, her face hidden*). Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

(*A pause.*)

BEN. (*approaching her a little, and then solemnly*). Think you in your soul the Count Claudio hath wronged Hero?

BEAT. (*rising on altar steps, her hand raised*). Yea, as sure as I have a thought or a soul.

BEN. Enough, I am engaged; I will challenge him. (*With*

WARN curtain.

a little cry of passionate thankfulness BEAT. *comes to him at foot of altar steps and gives him both hands.)* I will kiss your hand, and so I leave you. (*Bends over her hand and kisses it reverently, and then, releasing her hands and drawing back a few steps, and with his own hand to his sword.*) By *this* hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account. (*Goes* L. C. *as if to exit by gate* L., *and turns.*) As you hear of me, so think of me. Go, comfort your cousin: I must say she is dead: and so, farewell. (*Goes to gate up* L. *and turns.*)

(*As* BEN. *turns at the gate he finds* BEAT. *standing at altar steps, her arms outstretched toward him. He rushes to her, she to him, and they meet* C. *She falls into his arms, sobbing, and buries her face on his breast.* PICTURE.)

CURTAIN

Scene 2.—*A prison.*

(*At rise, discovered,* SEA., *sitting in chair* R. *of table* R., OAT. *sitting on down-stage end of table.* SENESCHAL, MAN 3 *and* SERVANT 4 *standing grouped to* L. *of table. Their bills are leaning against the wall in the corners up back.*)

Enter *from door up* L., VERG.; *he coughs warningly. The* WATCHMEN *rise hurriedly and go up back and line up, facing audience.* Enter *door up* L., DOG., *for whom* VERG. *holds the door open. Comes* R. *and sits in chair behind table.* VERG. *crosses and sits on stool* R. *below table.*

DOG. Is our whole dissembly appeared?

Enter SEX.

VERG. (*seeing* SEX., *rising and crossing* L., *brings chair and cushion from below door* L., *and places them at* L. *upper corner of table*). O, a stool and a cushion for the sexton.

(SEX. *crosses and seats himself at* L. *upper corner of table and opens his book.* VERG. *waves to* WATCHMEN, *who move down* L. *and group*—SENESCHAL *and* MAN 3 *down stage —and then reseats himself* R., *below table.*)

SEX. Which be the malefactors?

DOG. Marry, that am I and (*indicating* VERG.) my partner.

VERG. Nay, that's certain; we have the exhibition to examine.

SEX. But which are the offenders that are to be examined? let them come before master constable.

DOG. Yea, marry, let them come before me. (*Gestures to* SENESCHAL *and* MAN 3, *who cross* R., *unchain and unbolt door down* R., *and beckon prisoners to come out of cell.* **Enter** CON., *who goes* L. C., *followed by* MAN 3, *who stands* L. *of him and above him.* **Enter** BOR., *preceded by* SENESCHAL, *and goes to* R. *of* CON. SENESCHAL *stands behind* BOR. OAT. *and* SEA. *move down* L. DOG. *to* BOR.). What is your name, friend?

BOR. Borachio.

DOG. Pray, write down, Borachio. (*To* CON.) Yours, sirrah?

CON. I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is Conrade.

DOG. Write down, master gentleman Conrade. Masters, do you serve Heaven?

CON. Yea, sir, we hope.

DOG. Write down, that they *hope* they serve Heaven. (*Rises and leans over table, stopping* SEX.'s *writing to add.*) And write Heaven first; for Heaven defend but Heaven should go before such villains. (*Sits.*) Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves; and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?

CON. Marry, sir, we say we are none.

DOG. (*aside to* VERG.). A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you; but I will go about with *him*. (*To* BOR.) Come *you* hither, sirrah; (BOR. *approaches to* L. *of table* R.) a word in your ear: sir (*whispering so that* CON. *cannot hear*), I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

BOR. Sir, I say to you we are none.

DOG. (*abashed*). Well, stand aside. (BOR. *returns to former position. To* VERG.) 'Fore Heaven, they are both in a tale. (*To* SEX.) Have you writ down that they are none?

SEX. Master Constable, you go not the way to examine: you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

DOG. Yea, marry, that's the eftest way. Let the watch come forth. (*Motions to* SEA. *and* OAT., *who come to* L. *of* CON.) Masters, I charge you, in the prince's name, accuse these men.

OAT. This man said, sir, that Don John, the prince's brother, was a villain.

DOG. (*rising*). Write down, Prince John a villain. Why, this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother villain.

BOR. Master Constable ——

DOG. (*interrupting him sternly*). Pray thee, fellow, peace: I do not like thy look, I promise thee.

SEX. What heard you him say else?

(DOG. *sits.*)

SEA. Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John for accusing the Lady Hero wrongfully.

DOG. (*rising*). Flat burglary as ever was committed.

VERG. (*rising*). Yea, by the mass, that it is.

SEX. What else, fellow?

(DOG. *and* VERG. *sit.*)

SEA. And that Count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

DOG. (*leaning across the table and shaking his finger at* BOR.). O villain! thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this,

SEX. What else?

SEA. This is all.

SEX. (*rising and taking book under his arm*). And this is more, masters, than you can deny. (*Comes down to* R. *of* BOR.) Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away; Hero was in this manner accused, in this very manner refused, and upon the grief of this suddenly died. (*Crosses* BOR. *and* CON., L., *turns* L. *of* CON., *and speaks across them to* DOG.) Master constable, let these men be bound and brought to Leonato's: I will go before and show him their examination.

(*Goes up and* **exits**, L. 1 E.)

DOG. (*rising*). Come, let them be opinioned. (*Goes down to front,* L. *of table.* VERG. *rises and goes down* R.)

(SENESCHAL *and* MAN 3 *come down behind* BOR. *and bind him.* SEA. *and* OAT. *and* SERVANT 4 *go behind* CON. *and bind him.* CON. *struggles and whole group works a little down* L. DOG., *as if to help tie* CON., *crosses toward him* L.)

CON. Off, coxcomb!

DOG. (*starting back to* C.). God's my life, where's the sexton? let him write down, the prince's officer, coxcomb. Come, bind them. (*Crossing again toward* CON.) Thou naughty varlet!

CON. Away: you are an ass, you are an ass.

WARN curtain.

DOG. (*backing away* C.). Dost thou not suspect my place? dost thou not suspect my years? O that he were here to write me down an ass: But, masters, remember that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass. (*Again approaching* CON.) No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow; and, which is more, an officer; and, which is more, a householder; and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina; and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns, and everything handsome about him. Bring him away. (*Waves the group* L. C. *out of his way. They crowd back up-stage.* DOG. *crosses to door up* L. *and turns.*) O that I had been writ down an ass!

Exit.

CURTAIN

ACT V

Scene I.—*Courtyard before* LEON.'S *House.*—*Afternoon.*

(*Discovered:* LEON. *seated in chair behind table* R., *his head buried in his arms on table.* ANT. *behind and* R. *of him bending over him.*)

ANT. (*compassionately*). If you go on thus, you will kill yourself;
And 'tis not wisdom thus to second grief
Against yourself.

LEON. (*raising his head*). I pray thee, cease thy counsel;
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine.

(*Rises and crosses* L. ANT. *follows him to* C.)

Bring me a father that so loved his child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak of patience.
But there is no such man: for, brother, men
Can counsel and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but, tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion.
No, no; 'tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow,
But no man's virtue nor sufficiency,
To be so moral when he shall endure
The like himself.

(*Goes to bench down* L., *and, seating himself.*)

Therefore give me no counsel:
My griefs cry louder than advértisement.

ANT. (*following* LEON. *to* R. *of bench down* L.). Therein do men from children nothing differ.

LEON. (*rising and crossing* ANT. *to* C.).
I pray thee, peace. I will be flesh and blood;
For there was never yet philosopher
That could endure the toothache patiently,
However they have writ the style of gods,
And make a pish at chance and sufferance.

ANT. (*coming to* L. *of* LEON.).
Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself;
Make those that do offend you suffer too.

LEON. There thou speak'st reason: nay, I will do so.
My soul doth tell me Hero is belied;
And that shall Claudio know; so shall the prince,
And all of them that thus dishonor her.

Enter DON P., L., *and* CLAUD., R., *down steps* R. 2 E. *They hesitate a second, as if regretful at having encountered the two old men.*

DON P. (*respectfully, but with slight constraint*). Good den, good den. (*Goes up toward gate, up* C.)

CLAUD. (*gravely, with respectful constraint, crossing with* DON P. *toward gate up* C.). Good-day to both of you.

LEON. (*stopping them*). Hear you, my lords ——

DON P. (*turning* C., *respectfully*). We have some haste, Leonato.

LEON. Some haste, my lord: well, fare you well, my lord:
Are you so hasty now? well, all is one.

DON P. (*coming down to* LEON., *appealingly*). Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old man.

ANT. If he could right himself with quarreling,
Some of us would lie low.

CLAUD. (*coming* R. *below table; with a touch of haughtiness*). Who wrongs him?

LEON. Marry, *thou* dost wrong me, thou dissembler, thou:—

(CLAUD. *involuntarily makes a gesture toward his sword, but immediately restrains himself.*)

Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword;
I fear thee not.

CLAUD. Marry, beshrew my hand,
If it should give your age such cause of fear:
In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.

LEON. Tush, tush, man; never fleer and jest at me:
I speak not like a dotard nor a fool,
As, under privilege of age, to brag
What I have done being young, or what would do,
Were I not old. Know, Claudio, to thy head,
Thou hast so wrong'd mine innocent child and me,
That I am forced to lay my reverence by,
And, with grey hairs and bruise of many days,
Do challenge thee to trial of a man.
I say thou hast belied mine innocent child.

DON P. (*gravely*). You say not right, old man.

LEON. My lord, my lord,
I'll prove it on his body, if he dare,
Despite his nice fence and his active practice,
His May of youth and bloom of lustihood.

CLAUD. (*gently*). Away: I will not have to do with you.

(*Starts up* R. *behind table, but stops* R. *of table as* LEON. *speaks.*)

LEON. Canst thou so daff me?

ANT. (*crossing* LEON., R., *and going* L. *of table* R.). Let him answer me!
Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence;
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.

LEON. (*restraining* ANT. *by a gesture*). Brother ——

ANT. Content yourself. God knows I love my niece;
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villains,
Boys, apes, braggarts, Jacks, milksops!

LEON. Brother Antony ——

ANT. Hold you content. What, man! I know them, yea,
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple,—
Scambling, out-facing, fashion-monging boys,
That lie and cog, and flout, deprave, and slander,
And speak off half a dozen dangerous words,
How they might hurt their enemies—if they durst:
And this is all!

LEON. But, brother Antony ——

ANT. Do not you meddle; let me deal in this.

DON P. (*coming down* L. *of table between* ANT. *and* LEON.).
Gentlemen both, we will not wake your passions.
My heart is sorry for your daughter's death:
But, on my honour, she was charged with nothing
But what was true, and very full of proof.

LEON. My lord, my lord ——

DON P. (*beckoning* CLAUD. *and turning up* C.). I will not hear you.

LEON. No? Come, brother; away! I will be heard.

(*Turns* L. *to exit into house* L.)

ANT. (*following him* L.). And shall, (*turning*) or some of us will smart for it.

Exeunt LEON. *and* ANT. *into house* L.

(*As they go,* DON P., *pained at the occurrence, looks across at* CLAUD., *and then as if to follow the old men and pacify them, crosses rapidly to house steps and goes up part way on steps. Decides not to follow them, turns on steps and sees* BEN., *coming* C. *entrance from* R.)

DON P. See, see; here comes the man we went to seek.

(*As* BEN. *enters,* DON P. *again turns thoughtfully to look into house so that he does not see* BEN.'S *slight of* CLAUD. Enter C. *from* R. *through gate,* BEN., *with grave and determined face, and comes* C.)

CLAUD. (*as if relieved at his advent*). Now, signior, what news?

(BEN. *turns pointedly, ignoring* CLAUD.'S *greeting.* DON P. *turns and comes down to meet* BEN., L. C.)

BEN. (*to* DON P.). Good-day, my lord.

DON P. Welcome, signior: you are almost come to part almost a fray.

CLAUD. (*trying to cover his inward chagrin by taking the matter lightly; but with more regret than flippancy in his tone*). We had like to have had our two noses snapped off with two old men without teeth.

DON P. Leonato and his brother. What thinkest thou? (*His inward chagrin at the occurrence plain in spite of the lightness of his words.*) Had we fought, I doubt we should have been too young for them.

BEN. (*coming down* C.). In a false quarrel there is no true valour. I came to seek you both.

CLAUD. (R.). We have been up and down to seek thee; for we are high-proof melancholy, and would fain have it beaten away. Wilt thou use thy wit?

BEN. (*turning sharply upon* CLAUD.). It is in my scabbard: shall I draw it?

DON P. (*wonderingly*). As I am an honest man, he looks pale. Art thou sick, or angry?

CLAUD. (*with forced lightness*). What, courage, man! What though care killed a cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

BEN. (*sternly*). Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career, an you charge it against me. I pray you choose another subject.

(*Crosses to* R., *below table.*)

DON P. (*to* CLAUD.). By this light, he changes more and more: I think he be angry indeed.

(*As* CLAUD. *answers,* DON P., *his mind still on the old men, crosses to* L., *and gazes off after them into house.*)

CLAUD. If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle.

BEN. (*seizing his opportunity as* DON P. *turns away* L., *and coming to* R. *of* CLAUD.). Shall I speak a word in your ear? You are a villain; I jest not: I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare. Do me right, or I will protest your cowardice. You have killed a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you. Let me hear from you.

(*Turns away* R. *and crosses down* R. *below table around to up* R. C.)

CLAUD. (*not understanding* BEN.'S *reason, but insulted, and accepting the challenge; calling after him*). Well, I will meet you, so I may have good cheer.

DON P. (*turns to overhear* CLAUD.'S "*good cheer,*" *and coming down* L. *of* CLAUD., *and merrily, as if to banish his depression*). What, a feast, a feast?

CLAUD. (*with bitter irony*). I' faith, I thank him; he hath bid me to a calf's head; the which if I do not carve most curiously, say my knife's naught.

(*Crosses down* L. *to bench* L. *and sits.*)

BEN. (*calling after him*). Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily.

DON P. I'll tell thee how Beatrice praised *thy* wit the other day. (*During the rest of this speech, comes gradually toward* BEN., *so that at the end of it he is at* L. *corner of table. With a shrug,* BEN. *turns and goes down to* R. *of table* R., *and stands turned away.*) I said, "Thou hadst a fine wit:" "True," said she, "a fine little one." "No," said I, "a great wit": "Right," says she, "a great gross one." "Nay," said I, "a good wit": "Just," said she, "it hurts nobody." And thus did she, an hour together, trans-shape thy particular virtues: yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the properest man in Italy.

CLAUD. (*bitterly*). For the which she wept heartily, and said she cared not.

DON P. Yes, that she did. When shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible Benedick's head?

CLAUD. Yea, and text underneath, "Here dwells Benedick the married man"?

BEN. (*crossing* DON P. L. *to* C., *and to* CLAUD., *sternly*). Fare you well, boy: you know my mind. I will leave you now

to your gossip-like humor; you break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, God be thanked, hurt not. (*Turning to* DON P., *and with grave dignity.*) My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you: I must discontinue your company: your brother is fled from Messina: you have among you killed a sweet and innocent lady. For my Lord Lackbeard there, he and I shall meet: and till then peace be with him.

(*Crosses* L. *and* **exit** *into house* L.)

DON P. (*amazed, following* BEN. *to* C. *and looking after him, and then turning*). He is in earnest!

CLAUD. In most profound earnest; and, I'll warrant you, for the love of Beatrice.

DON P. And hath challenged thee?

CLAUD. Most sincerely.

DON P. (*in amazed scorn*). What a pretty thing man is when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaves off his wit! (*Pause; then wonderingly, and coming down to* R. *of* CLAUD.) Did he not say, my brother was fled?

Enter *from* R. 2 E. *down steps* VERG., DOG., *followed by* BOR., *who is guarded by* OAT. *and* SEA.; *and* CON., *who is guarded by* SENESCHAL *and* MAN 3. BOR. *and* CON. *are bound.* VERG. *goes* L. C. *toward house as if to enter, but turns and stands up* L. C. *before porch.*

DOG. (*motioning to* BOR. *behind him to follow, and by a gesture directing the guards to bring him down* R. BOR., CON. *and the guards group* R. *of table* R., BOR. *in advance of others*). Come, you, sir: if justice cannot tame you, she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance: (*going toward house to* C., *and then turning*) nay, an you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be looked to.

(*Starts again towards house, but stops* C. *as* DON P. *speaks.*)

DON P. (*turning, and with surprised displeasure*). How now? two of my brother's men bound! Borachio one!

CLAUD. (*restraining him*). Hearken after their offence, my lord.

DON P. Officers, what offence have these men done?

DOG. (*coming down* C.). Marry, sir, they have committed false report; moreover, they have spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanders; sixth and lastly, they have belied a lady;

thirdly, they have verified unjust things; and, to conclude, they are lying knaves.

DON P. First, I ask thee what they have done; thirdly, I ask thee what's their offence; sixth and lastly, why they are committed; and, to conclude, what you lay to their charge?

CLAUD. (*sitting on bench* L.). Rightly reasoned, and in his own division.

DOG. Marry, this it is, sir.

VERG. (*thrusting himself between* DOG. *and* DON P.). Yes, in truth it is, sir.

DON P. What is it, my good friends?

DOG. (*thrusting* VERG. *back*). Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter: an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt as, Heaven help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, honest as the skin between his brows.

VERG. (*again coming forward*). Yes, I thank Heaven I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man and no honester than I.

DOG. (*waving him away*). Comparisons are odorous: palabras, neighbor Verges.

DON P. Neighbors, you are tedious.

DOG. It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor duke's officers; but truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

DON P. All thy tediousness on me, ah?

DOG. Yea, an 'twere a thousand pound more than 'tis.

VERG. And so could I.

DON P. I would fain know what you have to say.

VERG. (*interfering again*). Marry, sir, our watch to-night, excepting your worship's presence, ha' ta'en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in Messina.

DOG. (*taking* VERG.'S *right hand with his own right hand, and putting his left hand on* VERG.'S *shoulder*). A good old man, sir; he will be talking: as they say, "When the age is in, the wit is out." Well said, i' faith, neighbor Verges. An two men ride of a horse, (*placing* VERG. *across to* R. *and back of himself*) one must ride behind. An honest soul, i' faith, sir; by my troth he is, as ever broke bread; but, Heaven is to be worshipped, all men are not alike.

DON P. Indeed, good master constable, he comes too short of you.

DOG. Gifts that Heaven gives.

DON P. (*crossing toward* BOR. *to* R. C. *As he crosses,* DOG. *and* VERG. *go to* L. *before steps* L.). Who have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? (BOR. *and his guard move to front of table* R.) This learned constable is too cunning to be understood: what's your offence?

BOR. Sweet prince, let me go no farther to mine answer: do you hear me, and let this count kill me. (CLAUD. *rises.*) I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdom could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light; who, in the night, overheard me confessing to this man, how Don John your brother incensed me to slander the Lady Hero; how you were brought into the orchard, and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garments: how you disgraced her, when you should marry her: my villainy they have upon record; which I had rather seal with my death than repeat over to my shame. The lady is dead upon mine and my master's false accusation; and, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

DON P. (*at* L. *corner of table* R., *to* CLAUD.). Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

CLAUD. (*who, during the latter part of* BOR.'S *speech, has worked over to* L. *of* DON P.). I have drunk poison whiles he utter'd it.

DON P. But did my brother set thee on to this?

BOR. Yea, and paid me richly for the practice of it.

DON P. He is composed and framed of treachery:

(*Crosses* L. *and turns* L.)

And fled he is upon this villainy!

CLAUD. Sweet Hero: (*goes* L. *to* DON P., *and falling on his shoulder,* R. *of him*) now thy image doth appear
In the rare semblance that I loved it first!

DOG. (*coming to* C.). Come, bring away the plaintiffs: by this time our sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter: and, (*to the watch*) masters, do not forget to specify, when time and place shall serve, that I am an ass.

VERG. (*still before steps* L., *looking off* L.). Here, here comes master Signior Leonato, and the sexton too.

Reënter LEON. (1) *and* ANT. (2), *followed by* SEX. (3), *from house* L.

LEON. (*crossing hastily* R. *to left of table* R., *followed by*

ANT., *who stands* L. *of him*). Which is the villain? Which of these is he?

(SEX. *comes* C. *and is joined by* DOG. *on his* R. *and* VERG. *on his* L.; *speaks with them for a moment, and then quietly* **exits** C., *through gate and to* R.)

BOR. If you would know your wronger, look on me.
LEON. Art thou, thou, the slave that with thy breath hast kill'd
Mine innocent child?
BOR. Yea, even I alone.
LEON. No, not so, villain; thou beliest thyself:
Here (*turns* L.) stand a pair of honourable men;
A third is fled, that had a hand in it.
I thank you, princes, for my daughter's death:
Record it with your high and worthy deeds:
'Twas bravely done, if you bethink you of it.
CLAUD. (*coming to* L. C.). I know not how to pray your patience;
Yet I must speak. Choose your revenge yourself;
Impose me to what penance your invention
Can lay upon my sin: yet sinn'd I not
But in mistaking.
DON P. (*coming to* L. *of* CLAUD.). By my soul, nor I:
And yet, to satisfy this good old man,
I would bend under any heavy weight
That he'll enjoin me to.
LEON. I cannot bid you bid my daughter live;
That were impossible: but, I pray you both,
Possess the people in Messina here
How innocent she died; and if your love
Can labour aught in sad invention,
Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb,
And sing it to her bones, sing it to-night:
To-morrow morning come you to my house;
And since you could not be my son-in-law,
Be yet my nephew: (*crosses* ANT. *to* R. *of* CLAUD. ANT. *takes* LEON.'S *place* L. *of table*) my brother hath a daughter,
Almost the copy of my child that's dead,
And she alone is heir to both of us:
Give her the right you should have given her cousin,
And so dies my revenge.

CLAUD. O noble sir,
Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me!
I do embrace your offer;—(*kneels to* LEON. *and kisses his hand*) and dispose
For henceforth of poor Claudio. (*Rises.*)
LEON. To-morrow, then, I will expect your coming.
DON P. We will not fail.
CLAUD. To-night I'll mourn with Hero.

Exeunt DON P. *and* CLAUD. *through gate* C. *and off* R.

LEON. (*watching them off, and then turning* R. *to* BOR.).
This naughty man
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who I believe was pack'd in all this wrong.
BOR. (*taking a step forward, and warmly*). No, by my soul, she was not;
Nor knew not what she did when she spoke to me.
DOG. (*who, together with* VERG., *on his* R., *has come down* C. *after exit of* DON P. *and* CLAUD.). Moreover, sir, which indeed is not under white and black, this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me ass: I beseech you, let it be remembered in his punishment.
LEON. I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

WARN curtain.

DOG. Your worship speaks like a most thankful and reverend youth; and I praise Heaven for you.
LEON. There's for thy pains. (*Starts to produce money.*)

(*As* VERG. *sees* LEON. *fumble for his purse, he crowds forward to get it.* DOG. *with his right arm swings* VERG. *up-stage and behind him, and takes purse.*)

DOG. Heaven save the foundation!
LEON. Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thank thee.
DOG. (*bowing himself back up-stage, toward gate* C., *during speech, keeping* VERG., *who is trying to get back to* LEON., *behind him*). Heaven keep your worship! I wish your worship well; Heaven restore you to health! I humbly give you leave to depart; and if a merry meeting may be wished, Heaven

prohibit it! (*Turns up* C. *and exhibits purse to* VERG., *as if to lure him away, and then pocketing purse.*) Come, neighbor.

Exit *gate* C. *and off* R.

(VERG. *stands at gate distracted, not knowing whether to follow* DOG. *or come down to* LEON.)

CURTAIN

WARN music.

Scene 2.—*Outside* LEONATO'S *Monument.—Just before daybreak.*

Enter, L. 1 E., MAN 1, *with torch; crosses* R. *to* R. *of entrance to monument and turns.*

Enter *together,* CLAUD., R., *and* DON P., L., L. 1 E. *As they get* C., **enter,** L. 1 E., *four* CHOIR MEN *with torches, and stand grouped* L. C.

CLAUD. (*to* MAN 1). Is this the monument of Leonato?
MAN 1. It is, my lord.
CLAUD. (C., *reading out of a scroll*).

Done to death by slanderous tongues
Was the Hero that here lies:
Death, in guerdon of her wrongs,
Gives her fame which never dies.
So the life that died with shame
Lives in death with glorious fame.

(*Hanging the scroll upon the iron gate of the monument.*)

Hang thou there upon the tomb,
Praising her when I am dumb.

(*Turning to singers.*)

Now, music, sound, and sing your solemn hymn.

MUSIC.

CHOIR.

SONG

Pardon, goddess of the night,
Those that slew thy virgin knight;
For the which, with songs of woe,
Round about her tomb they go.
Midnight, assist our moan;
Help us to sigh and groan,
Heavily, heavily:
Graves, yawn, and yield your dead,

WARN curtain.

Till death be uttered,
Heavily, heavily.

(*Toward end of song* CLAUD., *as if overcome by emotion, turns and kneels before entrance to monument.*)

DON P. (*to singers*).
Good-morrow, masters; put your torches out:
The wolves have prey'd; and look, the gentle day,
Before the wheels of Phœbus, round about
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey.
Thanks to you all, and leave us: fare you well.

(**Exit** CHORUS MEN, L. 1 E. MAN 1, *with torch, remains* R. C. *After they have gone* DON P. *turns to* CLAUD. *and raises him compassionately.*) Come, let us hence, and put on other weeds; and then to Leonato's.

(*Starts to lead him off*, L. 1 E. MAN 1 *starts to follow. As they cross to* **exit**)

CURTAIN

Scene 3.—*Hall in* LEONATO'S *House.*—*Morning.*

Enter *from* R. U. E., *down steps*, FRIAR, R., *and* LEON., L., *conversing, followed by* BEN., R., *and* ANT., L.

FRIAR (*coming down to* R. C., *through* R. *arch*). Did I not tell you she was innocent?

LEON. (*crossing the* FRIAR L. *to* L. C., *and turning* L. C., LEON. *down-stage*, FRIAR *up-stage*).

So are the prince and Claudio, who accused her
Upon the error that you heard debated.

Enter *from* L. U. E., *down steps*, BEAT., L., *with* HERO, R.—BEAT. *has her arm about* HERO—*followed by* MARG., URS., GIRL A *and* GIRL B *in a group.* BEAT. *and* HERO *come to* C. *and stand under arch* C.; MARG., URS., GIRL A *and* GIRL B *group behind them up* C.

ANT. (*coming down with* BEN. *through* R. *arch and standing* R. C.). Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.

BEN. (R. *of* ANT.). And so am I, being else by faith enforced
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

(LEON., *going* C., *to meet* HERO *as she comes down, and standing* L. *of her, taking her hand.* BEAT. *releases* HERO *and moves to* L. *of* LEON.)

LEON. Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves,
And when I send for you, come hither mask'd.

(URS., MARG., GIRL A *and* GIRL B *cross up* L. *toward* L. U. E., *and as they reach steps, turn and wait for* HERO *and* BEAT.)

The prince and Claudio promised by this hour
To visit me. You know your office, brother:

(ANT. *comes to* R. *of* HERO, *and takes* HERO'S *hand from* LEON.)

You must be father to your brother's daughter,
And give her to young Claudio.

(*Crosses down* L. C. *to* R. *of* FRIAR.)

ANT. Which I will do with confirm'd countenance.

(*Leads* HERO *up to* L. U. E., *where he leaves her. She* **exits** L. U. E. *As* HERO *and* ANT. *start up,* MARG., URS., GIRL A *and* GIRL B **exeunt** L. U. E., *preceding* HERO. *As* HERO *and* ANT. *go up,* BEAT. *starts to follow. She has, up to now, studiously kept her eyes from* BEN., *who has been gazing at her, but as she turns to go, she throws him a swift glance, with a touch of her old roguery in it, and then immediately dropping her eyes again, follows* HERO, *and* **exits** L. U. E. *After exit of* BEAT., ANT. *quietly comes down through* L. *arch and stands* L. *of* LEON.)

BEN. (*after watching* BEAT. *off, and coming* C.). Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think.

FRIAR. To do what, signior?

BEN. To bind me, or undo me; one of them;

(*Turns to* LEON.)

Signior Leonato,—truth it is, good signior,

(*Hesitating, embarrassed how to put it.*)

Your niece . . .

(*Blurting it out awkwardly.*)

regards me with an eye of favour.

LEON. (*enigmatically, and with a quizzical smile, to puzzle* BEN.). That eye my daughter lent her: 'tis most true.

BEN. And I do with an eye of love requite her.

LEON. (*still enigmatically*). The sight whereof I think you had from me,
From Claudio, and the prince: but what's your will?

BEN. Your answer, sir, is enigmatical:
But, for my will, my will is, your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoin'd
In the state of honourable marriage:
In which, good friar, I shall desire your help.

LEON. (*crossing* FRIAR *to* R. *of* BEN., *and giving his hand*). My heart is with your liking.

FRIAR. And my help.

Enter *from* R. U. E., CLAUD., L. *and* DON P., R., *and come down through* C. *arch to between* BEN. *and* LEON. *Followed by* MAN 1 *and* MAN 2 *who stop* C. *and gradually*

work to L. C. *above* L. *arch, which they reach before re-entrance of ladies. Followed by* MAN 3 *and* BOY *and* SERVANT 4, *who stand up* R., *a little* L. *of steps.*

DON P. (*coming down*). Good-morrow to this fair assembly.

READY music.

LEON. Good-morrow, prince; good-morrow, Claudio:
We here attend you. Are you yet determined
To-day to marry with my brother's daughter?

CLAUD. I'll hold my mind.

LEON. (*to* ANT.). Call her forth, brother; here's the friar ready.

(ANT. *goes up* L. *and* **exit** L. U. E. CLAUD. *goes to* L. *of* LEON.)

DON P. (*turning* R. *to* BEN., *who is leaning against pillar, absorbed in his own meditation, his face wreathed in smiles*). Good-morrow, Benedick. (BEN. *starts and "comes to."*)
Why, what's the matter,
That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storm and cloudiness?

(BEN. *turns away, half embarrassed and goes* R. DON P. *winking across to* LEON. *and* CLAUD.)

I think he thinks upon the savage bull.

(CLAUD., *seeing ladies entering* L. U. E., *goes to* L. *of* DON P., R. L., *laying his hand on his arm to stop his jesting. To* DON P.)

CLAUD. Here comes other reckonings.

MUSIC.

Enter *from* L. U. E. ANT., R., *leading* HERO, L., *veiled.* BEAT., *veiled.* MARG. R., *veiled, and* URS., L., *veiled.* GIRL A, R., *and* COLUMBINE, L. GIRL B, R. *and* GIRL C, L.

Enter CHOIR *in a group, six boys without instruments, and four men—including* BALTH. *The procession crosses to* R. *and turns down* C. ANT. *and* HERO *come down* C., *in front of* C. *arch, between* CLAUD. *and* LEON. BEAT. *stands* C., *under* C. *arch.* MARG. *and* URS. *come behind and a little to* L. *of* BEAT. GIRL A *and* COLUMBINE *to* R.,

as if to watch proceedings through R. *arch, and* MAN 3 *follows them down and stands behind them.* GIRL B *and* GIRL C *remain up* C., *where they are joined by* BOY *and* SERVANT 4.

STOP music.

CLAUD. (*after all have entered and are in positions*). Which is the lady?

ANT. (L. *of* HERO, *under* C. *arch*). This same is she, and I do give you her.

CLAUD. (*steps toward* HERO). Why, then she's mine. Sweet, let me see your face.

LEON. (*taking* HERO'S *left hand and drawing her a step* L. ANT. *falls back to* R. *of* BEAT.).

No, that you shall not, till you take her hand
Before this friar, and swear to marry her.

CLAUD. (*going to* HERO *and taking her right hand*).

Give me your hand: (*kneels*) before this holy friar?
I am your husband, if you like of me.

HERO. And when I lived,

(*Releasing her hand, unveiling and stepping back a little* L.)

I was your other wife:
And when you loved, you were my other husband.

CLAUD. (*rising, amazed—slowly*). Another Hero!

HERO. Nothing certainer:
One Hero died—but I do live.

(CLAUD. *goes to her—on her* R.—*and takes her in his arms.*)

DON P. (*coming* R. C.). The former Hero! Hero that is dead!

LEON. She died, my lord, but whiles her slander lived.

FRIAR (*coming forward on* L. *of* LEON.).

All this amazement can I qualify:
When after that the holy rites are ended,
I'll tell you largely of fair Hero's death:

(*Crossing* LEON., HERO *and* CLAUD. *to* C., *where* DON P. *joins him.*)

Meantime let wonder seem familiar,
And to the chapel let us presently.

BEN. (*coming* R. C. *as* FRIAR *crosses—stopping him*). Soft and fair, friar. Which is Beatrice?

(FRIAR *stops and turns* C. DON P. *continues up and stands* R. *of* ANT.)

BEAT. (*coming down to* L. *of* FRIAR *and unmasking,—with pretended innocence*). I answer to that name. What is your will?

(FRIAR *goes up and stands* L. *of* ANT. HERO, CLAUD. *and* LEON. *work a little* L. *and look on amused.*)

BEN. (*surprised at her question, and then confused, blurting out*). Do not you love me?

BEAT. (C., *with pretended surprise*). Why, no;—no more than reason.

BEN. (R. C.). Why, then your uncle, and the prince, and Claudio
Have been deceived; they swore you did.

(DON P. *steals down to* R. *of* BEN., *followed by* ANT. *and* FRIAR, *who go down* R.)

BEAT. Do not *you* love *me*?

BEN. Troth, no;—"no more than reason."

BEAT. Why, then my cousin, Margaret, and Ursula

(*As* BEAT. *mentions them*, MARG. *and* URS. *pointedly cross to* L. C. *in front of* MAN 1 *and* MAN 2.)

Are much deceived; for they did swear you did.

(BEN. *and* BEAT. *turn, facing away from each other.*)

BEN. (*over his shoulder*). They swore that you were almost sick for me.

BEAT. (*over her shoulder*). They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

BEN. 'Tis no such matter.

(*Takes a step down* R., *and then turning.*)

Then you do not love me?

BEAT. (*turning and dropping a mocking courtesy*). No, truly, but in friendly recompence.

HERO. Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

(BEAT. *gestures to* HERO *to hold her tongue.*)

DON P. And I'll be sworn upon 't that he loves her;
For (*producing paper*) here's a paper written in his hand,

(BEN. *jumps at* DON P. *and attempts to seize sonnet.* DON P. *holds him at arms' length.*)

A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashion'd to Beatrice.

HERO. And here's another,

(*Producing paper.*)

Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,

(BEAT. *goes to* R. *of* HERO, *and attempts to snatch paper; but* HERO *passes it to* CLAUD., *who dangles it above* BEAT.'S *head, teasingly.*)

Containing her affection unto Benedick.

(*A moment's pause. Then* BEAT. *and* BEN. *turn toward each other slowly, and simultaneously, and their faces break into sheepish smiles.*)

BEN. A miracle! here's our own hands against our hearts.

(*Coming to* C., *and holding out his arms to* BEAT.)

Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity.

(HERO *pushes* BEAT. *toward* BEN., BEAT. *half hanging back, and speaking as she is pushed down.*)

BEAT. I would not deny you; but, by this good day,
I yield upon great persuasion; and partly to save your life, for
I was told you were in a consumption.

(HERO *returns to her place.*)

BEN. (*dashing at* BEAT. *and catching her in his arms*). Peace! I will stop your mouth. (*Kisses her.*)

WARN curtain.

DON P. (R. C., *with a peal of laughter*). How dost thou, Benedick, the married man?

WARN music.

BEN. (*turning to him*). I'll tell thee what, prince; a *college* of wit-crackers cannot flout me out of my humour. Dost thou think I care for a satire or an epigram? No; if a man will be beaten with brains, a' shall wear nothing handsome about him. In brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it; for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion. Come, come; let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts, and our wives' heels: therefore (*with a gesture to* CHOIR) play, music. Prince, thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife. (DON P. *turns up through* R. *arch and joins* COLUMBINE. CLAUD. *and* HERO *come* C. *and join* BEAT. *and* BEN.). Strike up.

MUSIC.

(CHOIR *sings.*)

(*Dance.*)

CURTAIN

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